

# The Krishna Lovers

## THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF ISLAM



After being conditioned to think Allah has no form, is not a person, but is some sort of abstract energy or light, I was so moved and excited, when in my endeavor to obtain the full picture of Allah and all his features, I came across this conversation between two great souls, namely Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and the saint Abdullah Patan. They discussed Allah's opulence, His personality, His color, His spiritual form, His omniscience and how creation, maintenance and dissolution are all enacted from Him, I was even more joyous when I found all these points are confirmed by verses from the Qur'an.

In realizing the difficulty facing today's inquisitive souls is in trying to understand the high philosophy of the scriptures and subsequent explanations, I have made a point to render the explanations in easy to understand English, that everyone may follow and understand. After all the concept or idea of the Holy Qur'an is to understand the meaning of serving Allah thus be able to simply and practically cultivate such a process into one's daily life. There is no use of high philosophy if no one can understand it or worse becomes confused and frustrated by it. This is not healthy for anyone.

For the benefit of unity, peace and elevation of humanity I have tried to bring to our attention the essence of all holy scriptures, the clear common facts which should be understood and used to bring the entire human race and environment into divine harmony, namely

- 1) There is only one God;
- 2) Everyone is a servant of God;
- 3) Goal of life is to serve and love God.

God sends His many messengers and holy books. For example, the Bhagavad-gita, the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Qur'an, for the purpose of uplifting humanity from lower to higher levels of consciousness.

Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad are just a few who devotedly presented God's guide books to us with practical instructions which they all exemplified in their own behavior, but in due course of time the spiritual knowledge has been lost or perverted due to misinterpretations, misunderstanding either unintentionally or intentionally for the aims of ungodly and unscrupulous leaders to increase political gains and illegal sense gratification. Only by the mercy of great devotees of God who have struggled for our benefit to preserve and make available the real meaning of the revealed scriptures do we have a chance to approach Allah. Those who are sincere can understand.

Understanding Allah as complete must mean He is personal as well as impersonal. Of course, for those seeking to love and serve Allah the first of the two would be the intelligent preference.

In this conversation between these two great souls the hidden treasures of the Holy Qur'an are manifested for our benefit. Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu removed the barriers between the different

religious and various sects of society by advocating and practicing love and devotion to the One Supreme Lord. In his discussion Mahaprabhu detailed that along with the fundamental teachings of the Qur'an, the existence of only one God, there are hidden treasures in the Qur'an which reveals Allah's personality and His spiritual form. Mahaprabhu beautifully explains that the Holy Qur'an actually advocates love and devotion to the Personality of Allah.

According to the historians Shree Chaitanya had full knowledge of all external and internal meanings of the verses from the Holy Qur'an but we

have only seeds of his statements. Therefore using this enlightening discussion and a critical approach, keeping the philosophy on an authentic level I have supported any ideas and concepts presented during this discourse by quoting the fitting verses from the Holy Qur'an. During this discourse the inconceivable nature of Allah was very nicely explained, showing logically and scientifically that as well as being impersonal, ultimately Allah is a personality owning unlimited names or titles according to which aspects of Himself He reveals in His various scriptures, which were revealed to His subjects according to their time, place and circumstances.

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu explains simply that the purpose of the Holy Qur'an is to establish within human society that Allah is the Absolute Truth, the eternal Supreme Being, the origin of everything and the cause of all causes. Mahaprabhu discusses to the joy of saintly Abdullah Patan that to understand these points will bring us under a one true united flag of love and devotion to Allah.

Also discussed within is - mystic power, fruitive activity, speculative knowledge, devotional service, union with Allah, rescued souls, friendship with Allah, personal feelings of Allah, Allah's face, vision of Allah and much more.



In closing this introduction to this book I hoped to bring into our vision what has been hidden from our sight, but is truly our birthright, to demand and to be given knowledge of Allah's Personal Nature. For only with such knowledge can we begin to judge for ourselves whether, as the Holy Qur'an establishes, the ultimate goal of life is love of the Supreme Person and whether the different devotional processes mentioned within the Holy Qur'an can rekindle the perfect eternal relationship which we are all looking for in a temporary material world.

## PART ONE

### History of Islam

Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Sallal-lahu Alaihe Wa Sallam, Peace be on him)



said, "The Qur'an was sent down in seven dialects, and in every one of it's sentences there is an external and internal meaning." (6, p. 50) Thus the Holy Qur'an is the message of Allah, sent to mankind in seven dialects and every verse has an external and internal meaning. If every verse has "external and internal meaning" that explains why today there are so many explanations and interpretations of the Holy Qur'an. At present in Islam there are many sects and schools which present their own interpretations. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) himself predicted that very soon his community will divide into 73 sects. (77, p. 24) But presently the Muslim community is divided into many more sects. In this way we can see that the proper understanding of the Holy Qur'an is not an easy task and is not something gained cheaply. But the ultimate goal of human life must be the proper understanding, following the will of God which is revealed in the bona fide scriptures. Thus the Holy

Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) gave much importance on acquiring divine knowledge. Once he said, "Excessive knowledge is better than excessive praying. It is better to teach knowledge one hour in the night, than to pray the whole night." (6, p. 49)



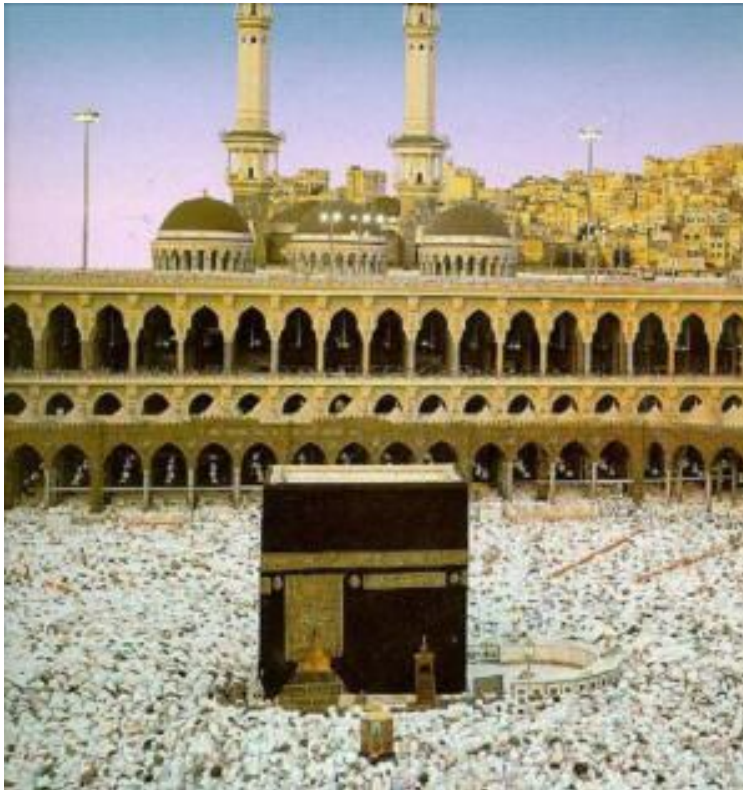
All these things have compelled me to present in this work, a conversation between two extremely learned persons about the inner meaning of the different verses of the Holy Qur'an. Anyone who has a sincere desire to understand God and His complete message will be interested in this book.

The first consideration will be that every messenger of God presents the same message according to time, place, circumstances, and the intellectual capacities of the audience. It is very important, therefore to consider the environment in which the Holy Qur'an was preached. Hence for deeper understanding of the activities of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) and the message he delivered let us go back to the ancient times of the Arab peninsula and consider the customs and beliefs of the people of that particular time.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Religion of the ancient Arabs

To understand the preaching angle of the Holy Qur'an and the Messenger of Allah we should be familiar with the environment and circumstances in which the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) had to preach.



According to early Arabian tradition, when Allah expelled Adam and Eve from paradise, after their sin of disobedience, Adam landed on a mountain in Sri Lanka and Eve fell on mount Arafat. After a hundred years of wandering they met at Mecca, where Adam, as per the instruction and design given by Allah, constructed a temple called the Ka'ba, and placed in its foundation the famous Hajar Al-Asvad, or "The Holy Black Stone", which had also fallen from paradise when the primal couple fell. This stone had

once been whiter than milk, but had since turned black on account of the sins of the pilgrims, who touched and kissed it. (98, p. 7) According to one tradition, this holy stone had previously been a guardian-angel of Adam. Because this angel had not been cautious enough, Adam was induced by Iblis (Satan) to disobey Allah. In this way Adam fell from paradise and this guardian-angel turned into stone and fell after him. (131, p. 30) Thus,

according to tradition, the Ka'ba was originally founded by Adam, and after his death rebuilt by his son Seth.

Tradition further says, that Mecca stands on the spot exactly beneath Allah's throne in heaven and that the Ka'ba is an exact replica of the tabernacle in heaven in which angels offer prayers to Allah. The Ka'ba is a cubic shaped building with a height of 45 feet. Ka'ba actually means "cube".

According to Arab historians, after the Flood, Sim, a descendent of Noah, established his home in the Arabian peninsula and he became the origin of several tribes. One grandson of Sim was Katan, and his grandson, Yarab, formed the Yemen state. The word Arab originated from the name of this descendent of Sim. (66, p. 6)

At the time of the Flood, the Ka'ba Seth rebuilt was destroyed. (51, p. 5) It was again rebuilt by Abraham and his son Ishmael. For rebuilding the Ka'ba, the Archangel Gabriel (Hazrat Jibraeel; 'Aliaihs-salam, Peace be on him) brought Abraham a flat stone (Makam Abraham) on which Abraham stood and which served him as a moveable scaffold while building the Ka'ba. That stone rose and fell under Abraham's feet as he required. Today this stone still bears his foot-prints. Now it is enclosed in an iron case and the pilgrims offer prayers before it. (98, p. 133)

When the temple was almost complete Abraham decided to place a noticeable stone in one corner so that pilgrims could start their ritual circumambulation around the Ka'ba from that point. At that time, the Archangel Gabriel showed Abraham the Holy Black Stone that had been missing when the Ka'ba was last destroyed. This Holy Black Stone was placed in the south-eastern corner of the Ka'ba. Later on, the Ka'ba was again rebuilt by the clan of the Amalikah, descendants of Noah. Then again by Banu Jurhum, who also descended from Noah through Katan. Several hundred years before the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, the Ka'ba was rebuilt again by Kusay ibn Qilab, who had led the Quraysh tribe to Mecca. At that time, according to the historian Azraqi, the Ka'ba was 4.5 meters (13.5 feet) high without a roof, and there were venerated stones in all four corners.

Today the Black Stone and the Ka'ba represent a sanctuary consecrated to God since time immemorial, and it is towards the Ka'ba that Muslims orient themselves in prayer. Thus the Ka'ba is a spiritual center, a support for the concentration of consciousness upon the Divine Presence. If one makes the ritual prayer inside the Ka'ba, it can be made in any direction. The Black Stone is in the south-east corner, set 1.5 meters from the ground. It is black with reddish tones and yellow particles, of ovoid shape, about 11 inches (28cm) wide and 15 inches (38cm) high, and set in a silver casing. In the opposite corner, set somewhat lower, is another stone of a reddish color, Hajar As-Sa'Adah (The Stone of Felicity). It is the center of the Ka'ba which marks the direction of the qiblah, the focal point of ritual prayer.

Thus, the Ka'ba had been built by Adam for the worship of the one God. It was called the "House of Allah". It is also called Al-Bayt Al-Haram, "The Holy House", and Al-Bayt Al-'Atiq, "The Ancient House".

In this way, the ancient Arabs accepted the one Almighty God and worshipped him. But they also believed that some human beings are outstanding in their relationship with Allah and their intercession on behalf of others is accepted by Allah. To reach Him is difficult for ordinary human beings, so people must have others to intercede for them to attract Allah's notice and help. The people of Mecca, therefore, had made images of holy and righteous persons and worshipped them. They also made offerings to these images in order to please Allah through them. (70, p. 1)

The ancient Arabs believed that Allah had entrusted the discharge of the various functions of the universe to different gods and goddesses. People would therefore turn to these gods and goddesses to invoke their blessings in all sorts of undertakings. (96, p. 22) They prayed to them to intercede before Allah and to pass their desires on to Allah. Arabs of the Syrian desert considered Al-Manat, "Goddess of fortune" as the consort of Allah and mother of gods. Some deities such as Al-Lat, "Goddess of sky" and Al-Uzza, "Goddess of Venus" were considered the daughters of Allah. (78, p. 27) The people of Yemen worshipped the sun. Other tribes worshipped the moon, while others worshipped the stars. Most of them, however, worshipped idols. Almost every tribe had its own idol. At Dumat-ul-Jandal, in the north of Hijaz, was the temple of Wadd. The idol was the image of a man, cut out of stone and covered with two mantles. It carried a sword and a bow on its shoulders, a quiver full of arrows upon his back and a javelin with a small flag attached near the spear-head in his hand.

The goddess Al-Manat had her temple at Qudaïd on the sea coast, half-way between Mecca and Medina. The idol of Al-Manat carried two swords. The goddess Al-Lat was at Taif and was worshipped by the tribe of Bani Saqif who lived in that city. The idol was in the form of a square cut rock. Just as famous was goddess Al-Uzza, whose temple was situated in the valley of Nakhla, not far from Mecca. (87, p. 29)

In Hijaz and Hajd, Arabs worship the stones named betil, "House of Allah". They circumambulate and touch them so that the power contained in the stone passes to them. There were stationary betils and traveling betils. Traveling tribesmen carried betil on the backs of camels and priestesses played on drums and sang hymns. In addition to all these stones and deities, the Arab tribes also worshipped their forefathers. (41, p. 20)

Ancient Arabs believed that by preparing the sculptures of gods and goddesses and by performing proper rituals they could cause the actual gods and goddesses to manifest within the sculptures. They paid divine honors not merely to sculptured idols, but also venerated all types of beings and natural objects. Angels, jinns, or evil spirits, and stars were all their deities. They believed that the angels were daughters of Allah and the jinns were His partners in divinity. (21, p. 20) They would even worship pieces of stones, trees, and sand-heaps. They would fall prostrate before any fine piece of stone; they would worship sandhills after having milked their camel thereon. Going out on a journey they would carry four stones along with them, three to make a hearth for cooking while the fourth to serve as an object of worship. Sometimes no separate stone for worship would be carried. So after cooking was done any one of the three stones used as a hearth would be pulled out and worshipped. (97, p. 14)

Some Arab tribes worshipped fire, others, the male and female genitals, while sometimes some famous persons produced his own sculptures and forced others to worship them. (90, p. 17) Some tribal men made idols from dates which they and their children sometimes devoured to satisfy their hunger. (124, p. 8) These ancient Arabs also had some terrible customs, like sacrificing their new born baby-girl to idols or burying them alive.

Gradually the Ka'ba lost its influence and Mecca lost its prominence. To counter this, the city authorities decided to put a very influential deity named Hubal in the Ka'ba. (162, p. 21) It was brought from Moab, in Palestine. Seven arrows were placed in its hands. These were used for divination and omens. The Ka'ba was a famous place of pilgrimage and to make it more attractive for the Arab tribes, Meccans slowly started to collect different idols. Soon three hundred and sixty idols were installed within the Ka'ba and its courtyard. The deities of Al-Lat, Al-Manat and Al-Uzza were nicely dressed and decorated. Wadd, Sava, Yagus, Yauk and Nasr also were very honorable idols. Muslim historians claim that these idols were worshippable even before the Great Flood. Wadd is a personification of the sky in a male form, Sava had a female form, Yagus had the form of a lion, Yauk that of a horse, and Nasp that of a kite. There was another idol in the form of a big wooden pigeon.

The ancient Arabs worshipped these deities by offering incense, costly presents, food, etc. They bathed the deities with scented water, honey, and the blood of sacrificial animals.

In front of the Ka'ba there were two statues, one of a man and the other of a woman - Isaf and Naila. Tradition says that one day this young couple wanted intimacy and finding no other suitable place, entered the Ka'ba and polluted it with an ugly sin. Forthwith, they were punished by Allah and turned into stone. The people later discovered their petrified bodies exposed in the courtyard of the Ka'ba as a warning to one and all. But people's ignorance was so great that even these statues were considered deities and adored. (119, p. 118) Inside the Ka'ba there were fresco paintings including those of Abraham and the virgin Mary with the baby Jesus. (119, p. 13)

The Arabs had a custom of performing a sevenfold circumambulation of the Ka'ba completely naked. Men performed this in the day time and women at night.

No doubt, the ancient Arabs believed somewhat in Allah, the one Lord of the heaven and earth, but they didn't worship Him. They worshipped the idols and thought the idols did everything for them, such as bringing them rain and riches, and carrying their prayers to Allah.

Thus from the history of the Ancient Arabs we can understand that in due course of time, the principles of true religion was distorted and people worshiped anything and everything beside the Supreme Lord. In this condition of the Arab peninsula the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) appears to reestablish the principles of true religion. As people were then worshipping various false fabricated deities, the Holy Prophet

Muhammad (S. A. W.) strictly forbade such worship; however, with the passage of time, it became traditionally conventional to reject all deities, regardless of their genuine or spurious nature.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Hanif - The Upright One**

Now let us consider the particular details from the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Sallal-lahu alaihe wa Salam) before he started his preaching activities. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.), son of Abdullah of the tribe of Quraysh, was born in Mecca on 29th of August, 570 A. D. in the house of his mother Amina. (90, p. 8) His father died before he was born, and his mother soon after. He was raised by his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, a very respected person in Mecca. The Ka'ba was under his care. This temple, built by Adam and rebuilt by others for the worship of the one Almighty God, Allah, was still called the "House of Allah", but the chief objects of worship were some 360 idols, called daughters of Allah and intercessors.

The few who felt disgust at this idolatry, which had prevailed for centuries, longed for the religion of Abraham and tried to find out what were his true teachings. Such seekers of the truth were known as Hunafa (sing. Hanif), a word originally meaning "those who turn away" (from the existing idol worship), but came in the end to mean "upright" or "by nature upright", because such persons held the way of truth to be the right conduct. These Hunafa did not form a community, each sought the truth by the light of his own inner consciousness. (95, p. 4) They believed in life after death and that their destination after death depended upon personal conduct, hence they strove for virtue, freedom from sin, and resigned themselves to Allah's will. The Hunafa practiced asceticism. They retired from social life, lived in a solitary place and performed meditation. Thus amidst all this degradation there were people who tried to follow the principles of true religion and strive for God-realization.

The degradation of moral codes and religious principles had come to a point where a messenger of Allah was needed. He had to be the best of people from his community. So Hazrat Muhammad (S. A. W.), the upright one was chosen by Allah and empowered to fulfill Allah's desire.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Hazrat Muhammad became the Prophet**

Hazrat Muhammad (S. A. W.) grew up under the care of his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, who was in charge of the temple Ka'ba. Throughout his day Abdul Muttalib would be in front of the Ka'ba with his favored grandson Muhammad (S. A. W.). In this way Hazrat



Muhammad (S. A. W.) picked up different religious traditions off the Meccans. He grew up to be a devotee of goddess Al-Uzza. The Apostle of God once mentioned Al-Uzza, saying: "I have offered a white sheep to Al-Uzza, while I was a follower of the religion of my people." (71, p. 17) But gradually Hazrat Muhammad (S. A. W.) began to realize the distortions in the religious practices of his countrymen. He was attracted to the religious activities of the Hunafas and after some years of cultivation he also came to be known as a Hanif. It was his practice to retire from his family to a cave in the desert for meditation for a period of one month every year. (168, p. 3) His place of retreat was Hira, a desert hill not far from Mecca, and his chosen month was Ramazan (December), the month of heat. It was there, one night towards the end of his stay, that the first revelation came to him when he was forty years old. (95, p. 4) This happened on the seventeenth day of Ramazan month (22nd of December, 610), that date is since named Al-Gadir, "Night of Power".

Hazrat Muhammad was asleep when he heard a voice calling him. When he opened his eyes he saw a bright dazzling light and fell unconscious. (74, p. 38) When he regained consciousness he saw an angel in the likeness of a man, carrying a written document enveloped in precious silk. The angel said, "Read!" He replied, "I cannot read". Indeed he was illiterate. The angel placed the document on his chest. Hazrat Muhammad felt as if a mountain had fallen upon him and thought that he would die of suffocation. Then, the angel lifted the document and repeated, "Read!" He replied, "I cannot read" and again the angel pressed him even stronger than before. A third time the angel commanded in a more terrible voice, "Read!"

"What have I to read?"

The angel said:

"Read: In the name of your Lord Who created,

Created man from a clot.

Read: Your Lord is Most Bountiful,

Who taught by the pen,

Taught man that which he knew not."

(Qur'an 96.1-5)

Hazrat Muhammad submissively repeated the words and they remained "as if inscribed in his heart". He went out of the cave, onto the hillside and heard the same awe-inspiring voice say, "O Muhammad! You are Allah's messenger and I am Gabriel." Then he raised his eyes and saw the angel standing in the sky above the horizon and again the dreadful voice said, "O Muhammad! You are Allah's messenger and I am Gabriel." Hazrat Muhammad stood still. Due to the brightness of the light he turned his face away, but

whichever direction he would turn his face, the angel always stood there confronting him. He remained standing there for a long time until the angel vanished. (95, p. 5)

Thus the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) received the first revelation of the Holy Qur'an and was appointed as a messenger of God. Later on he received more and more revelations and finally Al-Qur'an was compiled in the shape of this sacred book. There are a number of scholars who doubt the authenticity of the Holy Qur'an and the way in which the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) received the Qur'anic revelations. They deny that Al-Qur'an is a revealed scripture; however, a closer look at the historic record of Qur'anic revelations and compilation of the Holy Qur'an affords one a clear view of the authentic nature of the Holy Qur'an. Now, how has the Holy Qur'an come to be in our midst? Let us explore.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Al-Qur'an - The Reading

The message the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Sallal-lahu alaihe wa Salam) got on mount Hira was the first in a series of revelations of Allah conveyed through the Archangel Gabriel. In this way, throughout the rest of his life he received revelations, which were later arranged into the 114 suras (chapters) of Al-Qur'an. At the time of each revelation his physical condition changed. His body became heavy and he started shivering and perspiring profusely. He heard bells ringing and would cry out and fall down unconscious.

The words which came to him at the time of these



revelations are held sacred by Muslims. Those words are never confused with the words he uttered in a normal physical state. The words of the revelations comprise the Holy Qur'an. The words of the Prophet himself are called the Hadith. Because the Archangel Gabriel on mount Hira ordered him to read and insisted on his reading, despite his illiteracy, the Sacred Book is known as Al-Qur'an, "The Reading" - the reading of the man who did not know how to read. (95, p. 5)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) said that the origin of revelation is the "Heavenly Book" or Ummul Kutub, "Mother Book", written by Allah and preserved under His Throne. Only part of this book was revealed in the Arabic language. (36, p. 50) Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) said, "The Qur'an was sent down in seven dialects." This statement is connected with the following incident:

Omer-ibn-al-Khattab said: "I heard Hisham-bin-Hacim-bin-Nizam read the chapter entitled Furkan, in another manner than that which I read it, and the Prophet taught me that chapter; and when I read it as he taught me, and he read it differently, I was near being angry with him: after that I waited, till he had finished reading; then I threw my garment upon his neck, and pulled him, and brought him to the Prophet, and said, "O Prophet, verily I heard this man read the chapter Furkan, in a different way from that which you taught me." And the Prophet said, "Let Hisham go," and he said to Hisham, "Read the chapter." And he read it in the manner that he had done; and his highness said, "Thus has this chapter descended." After that he said to me, "Read it," which I did as I remembered. Here also he said, "Thus was this chapter sent down." And as we were confounded when he said of both, thus it was sent down. Verily the Qur'an was sent down in seven dialects: than read what is easy and agreeable to you." (101, p. 521)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) himself made distinctions in his various utterances. For some things he said, "This is the message of God, take it down, learn it by heart, recite it in ritual prayers. This is the Qur'an." For others, either he said that it was God's revelation or said nothing, yet in any case he did not demand that these should be included in the Holy Qur'an. These other sayings are the Hadith. The description of his activities is the Sunna. (119, pp. 120-121)

The Holy Prophet decided that the revelations of the fragments of the Holy Qur'an should not be compiled in the mechanical manner of chronological order. He himself gave them a different order. Thus the very first revelation, which significantly praises the "pen" as the custodian of human knowledge, is now in the 96th of the 114 suras of the Holy Qur'an. It was even necessary, since a sura was not always revealed in its entirety, but various parts came down at intervals. According to historians sometimes several suras were given simultaneously in the course of fragmentary revelations. So whenever a new passage was revealed the Holy Prophet indicated its exact place in what had been revealed up to that time. He himself not only gave the sequence of the verses, but also of the suras. This required constant revision and control. So every year in the month of Ramazan, the Holy Prophet had the habit of reciting the till-then-revealed Qur'an publicly and his companions brought their copies and collated and corrected everything. During the last Ramazan of his life he did this twice as a matter of further precaution. These collations and public recitations were called arada, "the presentation".

Since revelations continued to come up to the end of his life, no official edition of the Holy Qur'an could be published during his lifetime. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) passed away on the 25th May 632 and there was no possibility of new additions, the Caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr (Razi Allahu anhu) appointed a committee under the presidentship of the chief secretary of the Holy Prophet, the Ansarite Hazrat Zaid ibn

Thabit (R. A. A.), to prepare a final version of the Holy Qur'an in the form of a book. Hazrat Zaid (R. A. A.) was himself a hafiz (memorizer), but as a further precaution the Caliph ordered that for every verse or word he put in writing, he should have two witnesses, two written documents collated during the "presentations" of the Holy Prophet. People were asked to bring their private copies to the mosque, and show them to Hazrat Zaid (R. A. A.) and his assistant. When the work was completed, Hazrat Zaid (R. A. A.) read it twice from beginning to end and all deficiencies were corrected. The final version remained with the Caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr (R. A. A.) and later was passed to his successor Caliph Hazrat Umar (R. A. A.), and then to Hazrat Umar's daughter Hazrate Hafsa (R. A. A.), the widow of the Holy Prophet.

After some time, when Hazrat Osman (R. A. A.) became Caliph, he had the old copy brought to him and entrusted it to another commission, presided by the same Hazrat Zaid ibn Thabit (R. A. A.), who brought the spelling up to date and made seven copies. These were publicly read in the Grand Mosque of Medina to the satisfaction of everybody. They were then sent to different provincial centers of the vast Muslim empire with the order that henceforth other public copies should conform only with the official copy and any copy which differed from it should be destroyed. (119, p. 121) But owing to the fact that the Kufic script in which the Holy Qur'an was originally written contained no indication of vowels or diacritical points, various readings are recognized by Muslims as of equal authority. (55, p. 6)

The arrangement of the Holy Qur'an is not easy to understand. Revelations of various dates and on different subjects are to be found together in the same suras. Some of the Medina suras, though of late revelation, are placed first, and the very early Meccan suras placed at the end. In regard to the placing of the very early Meccan suras at the end, some authors propose that the inspiration of the Holy Prophet progressed from inward things to outward things, whereas most people find their way from outward things to things within. (95, p. 16)

Thus, in summary, Al-Qur'an is the word of Allah. It was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) in portions over a period of 23 years. It is divided into 114 chapters, or suras, containing in all about 6,200 verses, or ayats. The sayings of the Holy Prophet which he did not include in the Holy Qur'an are called Hadith. If the Holy Prophet had said, "Allah says that...", it is called Hadith Qudsi, the saintly saying. When there is no precision, it is Hadith. In addition to the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith the description of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's (S. A. W.) conduct and activities is called the Sunna. (119, p. 122)

This is how the Holy Qur'an was compiled and preserved. It is considered a bona fide scripture by Muslims. Not only by Muslims but many world scholars and scientists also accept the Holy Qur'an as a authentic scripture. Worldwide renowned eminent scholar and great religionist Srila Prabhupada said in this regard:

"According to the climate, according to the population, according to the country, there are different books of knowledge. Just like in India the book of knowledge is accepted as

the Vedas, Vedic knowledge. In your European, American countries the book of knowledge accepted as the Old Testament, New Testament. Similarly, the book of knowledge amongst the Muslims, (which) they have accepted as the Qur'an. Actually, they are book of knowledge, undoubtedly. There is no doubt about it. But what are these book of knowledge, religious scripture? Religious scripture means they are meant for training you to that conception of life that you are pure soul, nothing more. They restrict your bodily activities under certain conditions. That is called morality" (27, p. 6).

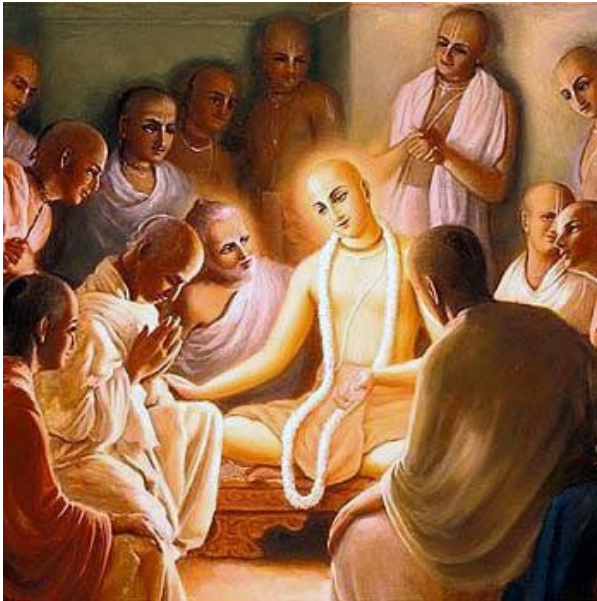
Another great religious reformer and original spiritual master was Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He believes in one Almighty God and chanting His holy names is the main process of God-realization for this age. He vigorously preached and distributed love of God without consideration of creed, nationality or social position of recipient. According to historians he was a great expert in all revealed scriptures of the world.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) is quoted as saying, "In every one of its (Al-Qur'an's) sentences there is an external and an internal meaning." (6, p. 50) The external meaning most people can understand. Therefore it is this internal meaning which lies hidden in the Holy Qur'an that I wish to scrutinize. Now, a most interesting discussion unfolds itself. It took place in the 15th century between the saintly scholar Abdullah Patan and Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who discussed the inner meaning of the Qur'anic verses. Through this discussion the hidden treasures of Al-Qur'an once again were revealed for the benefit of humanity.

## **PART TWO**

### **Meeting**

480 years ago, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was traveling from Vrindavan to Prayag along the banks of the river Ganges with four associates.



Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was born in Mayapur in the town of Nadia on the evening of the 18th of February, 1486. In those days in India, Navadvipa was a center of learning rival to Benares. Mahaprabhu was a beautiful child with a golden complexion, and the ladies of the town came to welcome his birth by offering presents. His grandfather, Pandita Nilambara Chakravarti, a renowned astrologer, foretold that the child would be a great personage in time. By his tenth year, Shree Chaitanya was an outstanding scholar in logic, grammar, rhetoric, and the scriptures. Hence his



name Nimai Pandit. The designation pandit signifies profound erudition. All the great scholars of Nadia recognized his scholarship, which became renowned when he defeated Keshava Mishra of Kashmire, one of the greatest scholars of his time, in public debate. Shree Chaitanya had one very distinguished characteristic - he always chanted God's name. The people of Nadia said, "Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is not only a great genius, but he is certainly a missionary from God Almighty." This turned out to be true.

Mahaprabhu launched forth the worship and congregational chanting of the holy names of God, proclaiming that there is but one God of whom everyone else is a servant. He urged everyone to chant the holy names of and worship that sole supreme God, asserting that the performance of such spiritual activities will surely award one the highest form of salvation. Incensed at Mahaprabhu's preaching activities, some of the Hindus, who were attached to worshipping many gods, lodged a complaint against his sacred mission to the magistrate of Navadvipa. They accused Mahaprabhu of ruining their age-old tradition of worshipping many gods by vigorously preaching that there is only one God. The then magistrate was a true Muslim whose name was Chand Kazi. As a magistrate, he was duty-bound to take action. So he tried to stop this movement. As a



result Mahaprabhu came to the magistrate's house where he held a long discussion on the Holy Qur'an and the sacred Vedas with the latter. This discussion in itself is so profoundly significant that it merits separate treatment; therefore, it is but proper that we reserve it for a future book. As the discussion was drawing to a close, Chand Kazi understood that Mahaprabhu championed the concept of the existence of a supreme God who is one without a second. The discussion over, Mahaprabhu, who was a pure devotee of God, touched Kazi's body whereupon the magistrate was elevated to the exalted position of a sincere devotee of the Supreme Lord. The Chand Kazi wept and admitted that he had felt a deep spiritual influence which had cleared his previous doubts. He now had spiritual feelings which gave him the highest ecstasy. The Chand Kazi then supported Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's movement. (49) The people were astonished at the spiritual power of Mahaprabhu, for he had changed a man strongly opposed to Shree Chaitanya's practice of public chanting of God's holy names. Mahaprabhu attracted hundreds of thousands of people, irrespective of their social status, to his spiritual activities and provided them shelter under the banner of his glorious movement after this incident.

When the Muslim King of Bengal, Nawab Hussein Shah Badasaha, heard of Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's influence in attracting innumerable people, he became very astonished and said, "Such a person, who is followed by so many people without giving them charity, must be a holy preceptor. I can surely understand this fact." The Muslim King ordered the magistrate: "Do not disturb this holy preceptor out of jealousy. Let him do as he likes under his own will." In private, the King inquired from his minister, Dabir Khas, who began to speak about the glories of Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Dabir Khas

said: "Why are you questioning me? Better that you question your own mind. Because you are the King of the people, you are the representative of Allah. Therefore you can understand this better than I." (49) Nawab Hussein Shah could see how the power of Allah acted through Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and, thus, he was convinced of his divine nature.

At the age of 24, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu consecrated his life to the service of one supreme God. He left his hometown and went on a six-year pilgrimage of India. In south India, at Kurmakshetra, he performed a miracle by curing a leper named Vasudeva. Everywhere he went he convinced people of all kinds to dedicate their lives to the chanting of the holy names of God. It was impossible even for learned scholars to oppose him for a long time, for there was some spell in him which touched his opponents hearts causing them to cry for spiritual advancement. When Mahaprabhu went to Puri passing through some jungles in Orissa state with his assistant Balabhadra he performed a wonderful miracle on his way: he made tigers and elephants, and other jungle animals dance in joy on hearing the chanting of the holy name of God. Generally, animals are fearful and envious; even so, after hearing Mahaprabhu's chanting of the holy name of God, they were overwhelmed with ecstatic joy, which supplanted their fearfulness and enviousness.

Mahaprabhu always slept little. His inner spiritual feelings carried him far and wide in the realm of spirituality every day and night. He constantly chanted the holy names of God, took no care of himself, and often lost himself in spiritual ecstasy. Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu always introduced himself as a humble servant of God, but his intimate associates, by seeing his many spiritual symptoms and observing him fulfill many scriptural predictions, realized that he was someone very special. He was most amiable in nature. Humility was personified in him. His sweet appearance gave cheer to all who came in contact with him.

While traveling in North India, along the Ganges, on the Vrindavan-Prayag route, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, understanding that his four companions were fatigued, took them all beneath a tree to rest. There were many cows grazing near by, and Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was very pleased to see them. Suddenly he heard a cowherd boy playing a flute. The melodious sound of the flute somehow reminded him of God; whereupon, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, struck with ecstatic love of God, fell unconscious to the ground. He foamed at the mouth, and his breathing stopped. While Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was unconscious, ten cavalry soldiers belonging to the Muslim Pathana military order rode up and dismounted. Seeing him unconscious, the soldiers thought, "This sannyasi (darvish) must have possessed a large quantity of gold and these four rogues must have taken away his riches after killing Him by making Him take the poison dhutura."

The Pathana soldiers thus arrested the four persons and wanted to kill them. Because of this, the two Bengalis began to tremble, but Krishnadasa, who belonged to the race of warriors, was fearless. The fourth member, a Sanodiya brahmana was also fearless, and spoke very bravely as follows, "You Pathana soldiers are all under the law of your king.

Let us go to your commander and get his decision. This sannyasi is my spiritual master. I am a brahmana from Mathura. I know many people in the service of your Muslim king. This sannyasi sometimes falls unconscious due to the influence of a disease. Please sit down. You will see that he will very soon regain his consciousness and his normal condition. Please keep us under arrest until my spiritual master regains his senses. Then you may question him and afterwards, if you like, you can kill us." The Pathana soldiers said, "You are all rogues. Two of you belong to the district of Mathura, and the other two, who are trembling, belong to Bengal." Krishnadasa said, "I have my home here, and I also have about two hundred Turkish soldiers and about one hundred cannons. If I call loudly, they will immediately come to kill you and plunder your horses and saddles. The Bengali pilgrims are not rogues. You are the rogues, for you want to kill the pilgrims and plunder them."

Upon hearing this challenge, the Pathana soldiers became hesitant. Suddenly, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu regained consciousness. Coming to his senses, he began loudly chanting the holy name of God. He raised his hands and began to dance in the ecstasy of love of God. When he shouted very loudly, it appeared to the Muslim soldiers that their hearts were struck by thunderbolts. Seized by fear, the Pathana soldiers immediately released the four persons. Thus Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu did not see his personal associates arrested. Balabhadra Bhattacharya went to Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and made him sit down. Noticing the Muslim soldiers around him, he regained his normal senses.

The Muslim soldiers then came before Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and said, "These four rogues tricked you into taking poison dhutura. Having made you mad, they tried to steal all your possessions."

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu replied, "These are not rogues, they are my associates. Being a sannyasi beggar, I do not possess anything. Due to epilepsy, I sometimes fall unconscious. Out of their mercy, these four men maintain Me."

Among the Muslims was a grave person wearing a black dress. He was known to the public as a saintly person. His heart was softened upon seeing Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's ecstatic symptoms. He wanted to discuss topics about God on the basis of the Holy Qur'an. The scholar put points forward to establish the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth on the basis of the Holy Qur'an and Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu respectfully presented counter points to establish the personal conception of God. Whatever points the Muslim put forward, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu presented counter points on the basis of the same Qur'an. The saintly Muslim kept trying to establish, on the basis of the Holy Qur'an, that Allah does not have personal attributes, but Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, by quoting the same Qur'an, presented counter points showing that Allah does, indeed, have personal features. Finally the Muslim scholar overwhelmed by the in-depth knowledge, vision, and clarity exhibited by Mahaprabhu on the Holy Qur'an humbled himself and offered all respects to such a great scholar and saint.

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu ended the discussion saying, "The Qur'an has certainly established impersonalism, but finally it refutes impersonalism and establishes the personal aspect of Allah." (49, Madhya-lila, 18.189)

During discussion Mahaprabhu gave deliberate explanation and quotations from the Holy Qur'an to support his statements but we have only general statements of his speech. Therefore to scrutinize, analyze and better understand Sree Chaitanya's presentation we dedicated to each of his statements one chapter. Thus each chapter begins from statement of Mahaprabhu and then we analyze it by quoting relevant verses from the Holy Qur'an and the recognized Muslim scholars.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

Allah's impersonal nature

Allahu nurus:

"Allah is the Light."

(The Qur'an 24.35)

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu agreed with the Muslim scholar that "The Qur'an had certainly established impersonalism."

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.189)

In the beginning of his speech Mahaprabhu admitted that the Holy Qur'an certainly established impersonalism which means that the Supreme Absolute Truth is not a person and has no form. He is without hands, legs, mouth, ears or eyes. According to this conception, spirit is the denial of matter; whatever pertains to matter cannot pertain to spirit. Spirit is just the opposite of matter. The material world is a realm of forms and personalities. In contrast, the spiritual world is a realm where nothing like forms or personalities ever exist.

For example, the 35th ayat of the 24th sura of the Holy Qur'an, states,

Allahu nurus - samawati wal - 'ard: "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth."

In this way the Holy Qur'an describes the impersonal feature of Allah. First of all, it is explained that Allahu nurus: "Allah is the Light". Indeed, Allah is the original spiritual Light. He illuminates the whole universe. All effulgent objects of the creation took their origin from this spiritual Light.

Eminent scholar and ustad (spiritual master) Abdullah Yusuf Ali in his commentary (9, p. 1015) on the verse (24.35) writes:

"The physical light is but a reflection of the true Light in the world of Reality, and that true Light is Allah."

The sun and the moon reflect this true spiritual Light. The original spiritual Light penetrates the whole creation. It is omnipresent.

Furthermore, the following statement occur in the Holy Qur'an:

Inna Ilaha wasi 'un 'alim: "Behold! Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing." (2.115)

Thus Allah is Wasi, All-Embracing, that is to say, everything exists in Him. Whereas He is Alim, All-Knowing which means His knowledge is unlimited, perfect, absolute and eternal, our knowledge is limited, imperfect, relative and temporary.

It is stated in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow":

Allahu la ilaha illa hu / al-Hayyul Qayyum / La ta' khuzuhu sina tun wa la nawm . . .  
Huwal 'Aliyyul 'Aziim: "Allah! There is no God but He, the Living, the Eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. . . . He is the Sublime, the Tremendous." (2.255)

This is the Ayat-ul-Kursi, the "Verse of the Throne". The attributes of Allah has nothing to do with qualities of this material world. He lives, but His life is eternal. It is not limited by time and space. His Life is absolute Life. His Being is absolute Being, while others are dependent and temporary. Allah's life is self-sufficient. It does not depend upon other living beings. In fact, His life is the source and constant support of all derived forms of life. Perfect life is perfect activity, in contrast to the imperfect life which we see around us, which is not only subject to death but also to the need for rest and sleep. But Allah has no need for rest or sleep. His activity, like His life, is perfect and self-sufficient.

It stated in the same sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow":

Wallahu Ganiyun Halim: "Allah is Absolute, Lenient." (2.263)

Thus Allah is Gani, "The Absolute" which means He is free of all wants. He is the Ultimate Truth and Supreme Perfection.

Furthermore the Holy Qur'an says:

Huwa al-awwal wa huwa al-akhir / wa huwa az-zahir wa huwa al-

batin: "He is the First and the Last, and the Outward and the Inward." (57.3)

This is other reference that indicate Allah's impersonal aspect: He is al-awwal wa al-akhir: "the First and the Last", namely, He is the beginning and the end of everything. He is az-zahir wa al-batin: "the Outward and the Inward", that is to say He is present outside and inside of everything.



Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments (9, p. 1687) on the verse (57.3):

"Allah is Evident in so far as there is ample evidence of His existence and providence all around us. On the other hand, Allah is Hidden in so far as intellect cannot grasp His essence nor can He be seen in the present world. The following tradition in Sahih Muslim is also significant for an understanding this verse. The Prophet (peace be on him) said: "You are the First, so that there was nothing before You; and You are the Last, so that there is nothing after You; and You are Evident, (or Ascendant) so that there is nothing above You, and You art the Hidden, the Knower of hidden things, so that there is nothing hidden from You."

It is stated in the sura "An-Nisa", or "The Women" of the Holy Qur'an:

Inna llaaha kana 'Aliyan Kabira: "Behold! Allah is Most High, Great." (4.34)

Thus Allah is Ali, Most High. No one is equal to or higher than Him. Allah is Kabir, Great. He is the greatest and no one greater than Him.

Also in the sura "Al-Hashr", or "The Gathering" we can find the following ayat:

Huwallaa . . . Salamul . . . 'Azizul . . . Mutakabir: "He is Allah, . . . Peace, . . . Majestic, . . . Superb." (59.23)

Thus Allah is Salam, "Peace". The attribute "Salam" has not only the idea of Peace as opposed to Conflict, but wholeness as opposed to incompleteness. Allah is Aziz, "Majestic" and Mutakabir, "Superb". He is above all things and creatures.

It is stated in the sura "Al-An'am", or "The Cattle":

La tudri-kuhul-'absaru / wa huwa yudrikul-'absar / wa huwal-Latiful-Khabir: "No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision. He is subtle and well-aware." (6.104)

So Allah is Latif, "Subtle". Latif means fine and subtle. So subtle as to be invisible to the eyes; so fine as to be imperceptible to the senses. No one can see Him, no one can understand Him.

Thus Allah is Nur - "Light", Wasi - "All-Embracing", Gani - "Absolute", Salam - "Peace", Aziz - "Majestic", Mutakabir - "Superb", Qayyum - "Eternal", Ali - "Most High", 'Aziim - "Tremendous", Kabir - "Great", Latif - "Subtle". All these attributes describe the impersonal nature of Allah. His impersonal aspect is a dazzling spiritual effulgence, which is unmanifested and beyond the reach of our senses, and our intellectual speculative capacity. The impersonal aspect of Allah has no legs and no hands, yet goes faster than all and accepts everything which is offered with devotion. He is self-effulgent. He is unembodied, beyond reproach, without veins, pure and self-sufficient. He walks and does not walk, He is far far away, but He is very near as well. He is within everything, and yet He is outside of everything, His power is inconceivable.

Although fixed in His abode, He is swifter than the mind and can overcome all others running, He surpasses all in excellence. He is unlimited. No one can fully describe the transcendental nature of Allah, the Absolute. No one can fully understand the impersonal features of Allah. He is beyond the expression of the mind and speech.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

Allah's personal nature

'Allahu Waliy yullazina 'amanu:  
"Allah is the Protecting Friend of  
those who believe."  
(The Qur'an 2.257)

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, as already mentioned, pointed out that the Holy Qur'an also "establishes the personal aspect of Allah."  
(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.189)

Although Mahaprabhu is agreed on the fact that Allah is impersonal, He nevertheless points out that according to the Holy Qur'an, Allah is also a person. Metaphysical philosophy defines a person as "a self-objectifying consciousness". This means that a person knows his own individuality and is aware of who he is. One who thinks, wills, feels; has senses, desires, qualities, remembrance, knowledge, relationships with others, individual existence, activities and identity is defined as a person. Only if this definition of a person is applicable to Allah, can we accept Mahaprabhu's statement regarding the personal aspect of Allah. Since Shree Chaitanya refers to the Holy Qur'an let us carefully analyze ayats of Al-Qur'an and ascertain the acceptability of his statement.

Logically, this statement of Mahaprabhu's makes perfect sense although we say the Supreme Lord is beyond logic. But if that logic is based on the revealed scriptures, then it is confirmed by the statements of the scriptures. Therefore, such logic should always be accepted. Since the scriptures proclaim that the Absolute Truth, Allah, is unlimited, then He must be simultaneously personal and impersonal, for if He is only one and not the other we impose limitation on Him. Thus we limit the unlimited. It will always remain inconceivable for us how Allah can simultaneously be personal and impersonal. It is possible because Allah is not a person in a limited mundane sense. His personality is completely spiritual, free from any material qualities, and beyond limits of time and space. He is an unlimited person with unlimited qualities and as such He can simultaneously be personal and impersonal. His personal feature is the energetic source of His impersonal feature just as the sun is the energetic source of the sunlight. Nothing is impossible for Allah and if He wants to be a person who can prevent Him from doing so? But apart from such undeniable logic, there are many indirect scriptural statements that establish the Supreme Lord, Allah, as a Person. Now let us consider if there are any verses in the Holy Qur'an which support this statement of Mahaprabhu's.

### **6.1. Allah has Light**

The previously mentioned ayat (24.35) of the Holy Qur'an states that Allah is Light, but immediately after that, in the next line, it speaks about Allah's possessing Light. Thus Allah is not just light but He has light, or light belongs to Him. Then in the third line, there is a very nice parable of a lamp cited in order to deepen our understanding that Allah is not merely light, but He also has light. It is this: just as light emanates from a lamp, so also does the spiritual light emanate from Allah. Now let us analyze this ayat of the sura "An-Nur", or "Light", more carefully:

Masalu nurihi ka-Mishkatin-fiha Misbah: "The similitude of His Light is as if there were a niche and within it a lamp." (24.35)

The words Nurihi, "His Light" is very significant.

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Physical light has drawbacks incidental to its physical nature: 1) it is dependent upon some source external to itself; 2) it is a passing phenomenon; if we take it to be a form of motion or energy it is unstable, like all physical phenomena; 3) it is dependent on space and time; its speed is 186,000 miles per second, and there are stars whose light takes thousands of years before it reaches the earth. The perfect Light of Allah is free from any such defects." (9, p. 1016)

This means that Allah has Light. He owns the Light. In other words, Light emanates from Allah. The example of al-misbah, a lamp, is given here. The light emanates from the lamp; the lamp is the source of light. Similarly, Allah is the source of Light from which all light comes. Just as mishkat, a niche, (a niche is a hollow area in the wall of an Eastern house, high off the ground, which was used to hold a lamp before the days of electricity) is the basis for misbah, a lamp, similarly, Allah is the basis for spiritual effulgence.

## **6.2. Allah has personal relationships**

If we study the Holy Qur'an carefully we will see that Allah has relationships with His creation. He guides, punishes and awards, gives life and death, becomes angry, summons, leads, loves and does not love, protects, teaches, beguiles, takes care, remembers etc. Such relationships between Allah and living beings display His personal nature, for only a person can have such relationships. Impersonal light or power cannot love, teach, remember, become angry etc. One must be a person to have such relationships.

For instance, in the above mentioned ayat (24.35) it is further explained that,

Yahdillahu li - nurihi many - yasha / wa yazribullahul - 'amsala linas / wallahu bi - kulli shay-'in 'Alim: "Allah guides unto His light whom He will and Allah does set forth allegories for mankind, for Allah is the Knower of all things." (24.35)

So, here, Yahdillahu, Allah guides, is mentioned, which means that Allah has a personal relationship with the living beings of His creation: "He guides whom He will."

Tuzillu biha mantasha-'u wa tahdi mantasha': "You (Allah) sends whom You wilt astray and guides whom You wilt." (7.155)

These ayats explain that Allah guides whom He will and sends astray whom He will. Allah guides us by giving us the revealed scripture. He also guides us from inside by personal instructions and from outside through the association and instructions of the enlightened saintly persons. In this way Allah guides us to the right path, helping us to realize our relationship with Him and surrender to Him. But if we reject His instructions and disobey His order, He will satisfy our desire by putting us into darkness. We will move further away from His light, from understanding the real meaning of life. Thus, Allah personally guides everyone according to one's desire. In this way His relationship with each of us is personal.

Qala azabi 'usibu bihi man 'asha / wa rahmati wasi-'at kulla shay / fasa-'aktubuha lillazina yatta-quna wa yu'-tunaz - zakata walla - zina hum-bi - 'ayatina yu'-minun: "He (Allah) said, I smite with my punishment whom I will but my mercy embraces all things, therefore I shall ordain it for those who do right and pay zakat (the dues for the poor people) and those who believe in Our revelations." (7.156)

Innal-laaha Qa-wiyun Shadidul-'iqab: "Allah is strong, severe in punishment." (8.52)

Falama nasu ma zukiru bihi 'anjay-nallazina yan-hawna 'anis-su-'i / wa 'akhaz-nallazina zalamu bi-'azabim - ba - 'isim - bima kanu yafsuqun: "When they disregarded the warnings that had been given them, We (Allah) rescued those who forbade wrong, and visited those who did wrong with dreadful punishment because they were evil-livers." (7.165)

In these ayats Allah explains that He punishes those who disobey His order and He awards mercy to obedient servants. Actually, when Allah punishes someone, being all-merciful, He does this for one's benefit. Just like when a father chastises his son, he actually does so for his son's benefit. We cannot accuse the father of being cruel. For by chastising his son the father protects him from incurring more suffering. In fact, Allah always wants to help us achieve real spiritual happiness. But if someone insists on being disobedient and continues committing sinful acts, he reaps bitter fruits for his sinful activities. Every action brings a reaction. As you sow you shall reap. Accordingly one gets reactions for one's actions. Everyone enjoys or suffers according to his previous activities. If someone suffers he should blame no one but himself, not Allah, as most people tend to do. When a government punishes a criminal, for example, it is for the benefit of the society as well as the individual. Similarly, when Allah punishes a sinner, it is for the benefit of mankind as well as the sinner. Thus, Allah mercifully cares for the sinner and nonsinner alike.

Huwa yuh-yi wa yumit: "He gives life and death." (7.158)

Allah gives life and death to everyone. He is the origin of life and He sanctions death to all embodied beings. He grants eternal life to His pure devotees and He meets nondevotees as death. Actually, all living beings are spiritual, eternal by nature, never-ending, but due to sinful desires they become imprisoned in a material body. These bodies are made of matter and therefore temporary, but the conscious soul within is eternal. All material bodies must suffer the miseries - birth, disease, old age and death. Those who are wise surrender unto Allah as He guarantees to personally deliver them to a blissful eternal life in His abode, but those who go against the will of Allah, will continuously suffer. Allah via His different energies controls and personally regulates the life and death of every living entity. The scriptures state even a blade of grass doesn't move without Allah sanctioning it.

Fi-'atin-faqad ba-'a bi-gazabim-minal-laahi: "He truly has incurred wrath from Allah."  
(8.16)

Those who disobey the will of Allah and especially those who commit offenses against His devotees incur the wrath of Allah. Allah personally favors His devotees and He arranges for the punishment of those who are offensive to them.

Wal-laahu yad-'u 'ila Daris-Salam / wa yahdi manya-sha-'u 'ila Siratim-Mustaqim: "And Allah summons to the Abode of Peace and leads whom He will to a Straight path."  
(10.25)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"In contrast with the ephemeral and uncertain pleasures of this material life, there is a higher life to which Allah is always calling. It is called the Home of Peace. For there is no fear, nor disappointment, nor sorrow there. All are called, and those will be chosen who have sought, not material advantages, but the Good Pleasure of Allah." (9, p. 555)

Those who strictly follow the principles given by Allah in the revealed scriptures, for them Allah leads to the right path. So at the end of this life when they leave their body Allah personally takes them to the Daris-Salam, "the Abode of Peace", or "the Home of Peace" where they live eternally in bliss and knowledge.

Wa 'inyam-sas-kallahu bi-zurin-fala kashifa lahu 'illa hu / wa 'inyu-ridka bi-khay-rin-fala radda li-fazlih / yusiibu bihi manyashaaa-'u min 'ibaa-dih / wa Huwal Gafur-ur-Rahim: "If Allah afflicts you with some hurt, there is none who can remove it but Him and if He desires good for you there is none who can repel His bounty. He strikes with it whom He will of His servants. He is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (10.107)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Even when we suffer under trials and tribulations, it is for our good, and no one can remove them except He, when, in His Plan. He sees it to be best for all concerned. On the other hand, there is no power that can



intercept His blessings and favours, and His bounty flows freely when we are worthy and often when we are not worthy of it." (9, p. 579)

An ancient proverb states, "If Allah wants to kill someone, no one can protect him and if Allah wants to protect someone, no one can kill him." If someone satisfies Allah by one's sincere devotional service, Allah rewards him accordingly and no one can repel Allah's bounty. But if someone commits sin Allah punishes him according to his misdeeds and no one can remove it besides Allah. If one endeavors to understand his mistake, regrets and rectifies himself, then Allah lovingly forgives him and removes the punishment which he no doubt still deserves. When a living entity realizes his constitutional position as an eternal servitor of Allah then spiritual life and understanding begins. Leading from this, if one takes up the process of sincere devotional service to the Supreme Lord, then Allah becomes very pleased with that relationship, and personally removes all the bad reactions for that person's previous sinful activities.

Inna 'anzal-nahu Qur'anān 'ara-biyā-lā-'allakum ta'-qilun: "Behold! We (Allah) have revealed it, a Lecture (Qur'an) in Arabic, that you (Muhammad) may understand." (12.2)

Allah explained here that He revealed the Qur'an in Arabic, so that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) may understand it. Thus, Allah time after time reveals His eternal message to different prophets in the appropriate language. In this way Allah personally delivers His message to the world.

Also, Innal-laaha yuhibul-tawwa-bina: "Allah loves those who turn unto Him" (2.222) and Innallaha la yuhibul-mu'-tadin: "Allah does not love aggressors" (2.190).

Allah has overwhelming love and compassion towards all His creation. No matter what sinful desires or activities a living entity cultivates Allah never hates any entity. He loves every entity like a father loves a son. Even His punishment is really a blessing, a wake up call to let us know we're drifting towards more misery and suffering. But it is stated in the revealed scriptures that Allah certainly favors those who follow the path of devotional service and surrender unto Him.

Allah has individual, personal relationships with everyone. He likes those who follow the path of devotional service and naturally He dislikes those who transgress the rules and regulations of the revealed scriptures. Allah gives mankind different scriptures for different people in different circumstances. Those who cultivate goodness and virtue, and desire the true path to please Allah will follow the principles of bona fide scriptures and attract Him. This is the ultimate goal of life, the ultimate happiness.

In this regard Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes:

"The Message (of God) was not merely an abstract proposition of philosophy, but the direct concrete message of a personal Allah to the creatures whom He loves and cherishes." (9, p. 1980)

Allahu Waliy-yullazina 'amanu: "Allah is the Protecting Friend of those who believe." (2.257)

Actually, Allah is the only friend of all living entities. So-called friendships in this world are not real friendships. Real friendship exists in the spiritual realm only. Ultimately, Allah is realized as the only friend to those who believe and follow His instructions. He personally protects His devotees from the dangers of material existence. Everyone who serves Allah with love and devotion can develop and maintain a personal friendship with the Supreme Lord, the reservoir of all pleasure. Friendship suggests existence of two persons. No impersonal light or abstract power can befriend the believers. This means that Allah is a Person.

Wa yu-'alimu-kumullah: "Allah is teaching you." (2.282)

Ultimately Allah is the only teacher of all living entities. He is the eternal spiritual master of everyone. He teaches everyone from inside and outside. Allah is omnipresent. Allah teaches us by three methods - from within, from His bona fide scriptures and via His messengers and saintly devotees.

Innal-muna-fiqlina yu-khadi-'unallaha wa huwa khadi-'uhum: "Behold! The hypocrites seek to beguile Allah, but it is Allah who beguile them." (4.142)

Nobody can trick Allah because He is omniscient, all-knowing and all-pervading. So those who try to cheat Him become cheated by Him. Those who deny Allah, cheat and deceive others by any means, whether it be a single wife or a whole society. They cheat themselves of real knowledge and sink ever deeper into the clutches of Allah's material energy, which is designed to keep impure, corrupt people in darkness and ignorance. Those who try to cheat Allah by posing themselves as religious persons but are actually committing sinful acts are the worst of the corrupt. They try to beguile Allah, but Allah beguiles them in such a way that they don't even realize it.

Zalikumul-laahu Rabbukum . . . Huwa 'ala kulli shay-'inw- Wakil: "Such is Allah, your Lord! . . . He take care of all things." (6.103)

Allah takes care of all things. Although Allah is the Supreme Lord and has no duty to perform, still out of His causeless mercy He takes care of every living entity. Allah is the creator, the maintainer, the provider, and the destroyer of all creation. He takes care of believers and non-believers, devotees and non-devotees. But unlike the path of struggle for existence chosen by non-devotees, those who surrender to Allah and serve Him with love and devotion, their needs are personally taken care of by Allah, supplying all their necessities of physical and spiritual life. They will enter a reciprocal relationship with Allah.

Faz-kuruni 'az-kurkum washkuru li wa la takfurun: "Therefore remember Me, I (Allah) will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and reject not Me." (2.152)

Here Allah clearly states that if we remember Him, He will remember us. Actually Allah always remembers us and takes care of us. So in appreciation we should give thanks to Him and not reject Him. In this ayat Allah invites us to be engaged in the important process of devotional service, namely remembering Allah. But this is not as easy as it sounds, as the mind cannot be held steady to think about one object. Especially in this age of quarrel and hypocrisy. The ancient scriptures say it's easier to control the mighty winds than it is to control the mind. Therefore constant chanting of the holy name of Allah is highly recommended in the Holy Qur'an to purify and steady the mind. A purified and steady mind is more inclined to His devotional service and by chanting His holy names we can easily remember Him in all circumstances.

Razi yallahu 'anhum wa razu 'anhu / wa 'a-'adda lahum jannatin-tajri tahtahal 'anharu khalidina fiha 'abada za-likal-fawzul 'azim: "Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the Supreme triumph." (9.100)

Allah is very pleased with those who render devotional service unto Him and devotees feel equally pleased and gradually reach a position of eternal bliss. By performing devotional service unto the Supreme Lord they happily reside in the temporary material world and after this life they will go to Allah. By constantly chanting and rendering devotional service devotees develop a personal relationship with Allah. When such pure devotees leave the body Allah personally takes them into His spiritual world.

From all these quotations we can understand that Allah has a personal relationship and directly connected with mankind. Allah is Wahid, One. At the same time He has munasabat, a relationship or connection with his own created Alam-e-Kainat, Universe. He is the Supreme Person, directly related with man and the world. But Allah should not be confused with a mundane person. He is a completely spiritual person with no tinge of material contamination. His personality is completely different from mundane personalities of this material world. His personality is beyond the limits of time and space.

In the Holy Qur'an Allah is revealed as the Creator, having manifold relations with men and the world. As for example: 1) He directs and guides people through his prophets and apostles; 2) He is pleased with those who follow Sarat-ul-Mustaqim, the Straight Way, and provides a reward of bihisht, heaven in the life to come; 3) He punishes evil doers and warns them of the coming punishment in jahannum, hell.

### **6.3. Allah has personal feelings**

From the Holy Qur'an we can also understand that Allah has personal feelings. He loves and does not love, pleased and displeased, shows mercy and favor, displays anger and wrath, feels pleasure etc. One who has such a variety of feelings cannot be an abstract light but must be a person.

Thus in the sura "Al-Imran", or "The Family of Imran" it is said:

Innallaha yuhibbul - Mutawakkiliin: "Behold! Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)." (3.159)

The negative feeling of Allah is explained in the sura "Al-Ma'ida", or "The Table Spread":

Wa yas-'awna fil-'arzi fasaadaa / wallahu laa yuhibbul-mufsideen: "Their effort is for corruption in the land, and Allah does not love corrupters." (5.64)

So Allah loves those who trust Him and does not love corrupters or miscreants.

Furthermore, in the sura "At-Tauba", or "Repentance" it is explained:

Was-saabi-quunal 'Awwa-luuna minal-Muhaajiriina wal 'Ansaari wallaziinattaba - 'uuhum-bi - 'ihsaanir-razi-yallaahu 'anhum wa razuu 'anhu: "The vanguard (of Islam) - the first of the Muhajirs and the Ansar, and those who followed them in good deeds, - Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him." (9.100)

The vanguard of Islam - those in the first rank - are those who dare and suffer for Allah and never flinch. The first historical examples are the Muhajirs and the Ansar. The Muhajirs - those who forsook their homes in Mecca and migrated to Medina. The Holy Prophet being among the last to leave Mecca, is mentioned first. Then come the Ansar, the Helpers, the citizens of Medina who invited them, welcomed them, and gave them aid, and who formed the pivot of the new community. Next, all who follow them in good deeds are mentioned. In spite of all their sacrifice and suffering they rejoice in pleasing Allah; their Salvation, which is synonymous with Allah's pleasure, affords them supreme bliss. Thus Allah derived pleasure from sacrifices of His devotees. He has feelings of a person, but that of a Supreme Spiritual Person, of course.

Laqattaa-ballaahu 'alan Nabiyyi wal-Muhaajiriina wal-'Ansaaril-lazii-nattaba-'uuhu fii saa-'atil-'usrati . . . Innahuu bihim Ra-'uufur-Rahiim: "Allah turned in mercy to the Prophet, and to the Muhajirs and Ansar, - who followed him in a time of distress. . . . Behold! He is Full of Pity, Most Merciful towards them." (9.117)

Another feeling of Allah and His reciprocation with His devotees is described in the sura "Yusuf", or "Joseph":

Qaaluuu 'a-'innaka la-'anta Yuusuf? Qaala 'ana Yuusufu wa haazaaa 'akhii / qad manna-laahu 'alay-naa: "They said: 'Are you indeed Joseph?' He said, 'I am Joseph and this is my brother. Allah has shown us favor.'" (12.90)

This verse is connected with an interesting story about the messenger of God, Joseph, that Allah narrated to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) (12.4-101):

The father of Joseph was Jacob, also called Israel the son of Isaac, the younger son of Abraham. Jacob had four wives. From three of them he had ten sons. In his old age he

had from Rachel, a very beautiful woman, two sons: Joseph and Benjamin (the youngest). The place where Jacob and his family and his flocks of sheep were located was in Canaan, and is shown, by tradition, near modern Nablus (ancient Shechem), some thirty miles north of Jerusalem.

Once Joseph said to his father: "O my father! I saw in a dream eleven stars and the sun and the moon. I saw them prostrating themselves to me."

His father replied: "O my dear son! Tell not your brothers of your vision, otherwise they will plot against you. The Lord has preferred you and will teach you the interpretation of events, and will shower His grace upon you."

Joseph was a mere lad. But he was true and frank and righteous. His father loved him dearly. But his stepbrothers were jealous of him and hated him. His destiny was predicted in the dream. He was to be exalted above his eleven brothers (stars) and his father and mother (the sun and the moon, respectively). The young lad Joseph (Arabic Yusuf) was innocent and did not even know of his brothers' guile and hatred, but the father knew and warned him.

After a while one of Joseph's brothers said: "Indeed Joseph is dearer to our father than we are."

Another brother suggested: "Kill Joseph or cast him to some other land, so that our father's favor may be solely for us."

A third said: "Don't kill Joseph, but throw him to the bottom of a well; some caravan will find him and enslave him."

They came to their father, saying: "O father! Why will you not trust us with Joseph? We love him immensely. Send him with us tomorrow so that he may play and enjoy himself. We shall take good care of him."

The father replied: "In truth it saddens me that you should take him with you, because I fear your carelessness will leave him for the wolves to devour."

They said: "If the wolves should devour him, when we are so close together, then surely we would have already perished."

Later, they led Joseph off and threw him to the bottom of a well. They came back weeping to their father in the evening: "O father! We went racing with one another, and left Joseph with our things, and the wolves devoured him."

They showed the "false blood" on Joseph's shirt. It was not the blood of Joseph, but the blood of a goat which the brothers had killed expressly for this purpose.

Jacob understood that there had been some foul play, and he did not hesitate to say so. Thus, with a knowing expression on his face, he said: "No, your minds have bewildered you into something wrong. The tale you tell may be good enough for you, who invented it, but not for me. I pray for Allah's aid."

Meanwhile there came a caravan to the well and when the water-drawer let down his bucket he found Joseph. They took him from the well and sold him as a slave. The rich man of Egypt purchased him and said to his wife: "Receive him honorably. He may prove useful to us. We may adopt him as a son."

When Joseph reached his full manhood Allah gave him wisdom and knowledge.

Once the wife of his master tried to entice Joseph to a sinful act. She bolted the doors and commanded: "Come!"

Joseph replied: "I seek refuge only in Allah. My master has treated me honorably. Wrong-doers never prosper." She truly desired him, and he would have desired her had it not been that he understood the will of his Lord. Allah always warded off evil and lewdness from him, for he was Allah's chosen servant. As Joseph hurried to the door, she tore his shirt from behind, and they met the master at the door.

The woman said: "What shall be the reward for one who wishes evil on your wife; it should be prison or a painful doom?"

"It was she who asked of me an evil act", said Joseph.

One of the lusty woman's household testified that if Joseph's shirt is torn from the front, then she speaks truth and he is the liar. But if his shirt is torn from behind, then she has lied and he is the truthful.

When the ruler saw Joseph's shirt had been torn from behind, he said: "This is your cunning and deception. Woman, ask forgiveness for your sin."

The women in the city said: "The rich man's wife is asking of her slave-boy an ill deed. Indeed she has fallen for him with all her heart. She is bewildered by lust."

When the wicked wife heard of their sly talk, she invited the city women to a feast and called Joseph: "Come out!"

When the women saw his overwhelming beauty they exalted him and cut their hands with the fruit knives, exclaiming: "O Allah! This is not a human being. This is no other than some gracious angel!"

She said: "Now you can understand why I cannot control myself in his presence. I asked of him an evil act, but he proved firm in his sensual control. But still if he does not do as I desire of him then he truly shall be imprisoned."

Now Joseph had all the women urging him for sexual pleasure as his beauty was so great. Joseph prayed: "O my Lord, prison is much better than to do as they urge me. If You do not help defend me from their persuasive desires then I shall fall weak and become foolish. So the Lord heard his prayer and fended off their evil desires.

After a while Joseph was imprisoned and two young men were imprisoned with him. One of them said: "I dreamed that I was pressing wine."

The other said: "I dreamed that I was carrying bread on my head, from which the birds were eating. Tell us the meaning of this."

Joseph replied: "O my two fellow-prisoners, as for one of you, he will pour out wine for his master to drink; and as for the other, he will be crucified so that the birds will eat from his head." Then he said to one that would be released: "Mention me in the presence of the king."

Upon his release the man forgot to mention Joseph to the king. As a result Joseph was kept in prison for many years.

Then the king had a dream: "I saw seven fat cows which seven lean cows were eating, and seven fresh ears of corn and seven dry ears of corn. O learned ones! Explain to me my vision."

His advisers answered: "Confused dream. We do not know the interpretation of such a vision." The man from the prison now remembered Joseph, he went to the prison immediately and exclaimed: "O Joseph, explain this dream, that I may return to the king and let him know the meaning of his vision."

Joseph replied: "You shall sow crops for seven years as usual, but that which you reap, leave it in the husk and save it all except what little you need to eat. After that will come seven hard years which will devour all your crops except that which you have stored. After that, will come a year when the people will have bountiful crops."

When the king heard this interpretation he said: "Bring this man to me so that I may keep him at my side."

After talking with Joseph the king said: "Today in our presence you are established and trusted."

Joseph said: "Set me over the storehouses of the land, for I am a skilled custodian."

Having been put through all kinds of trials and tribulations Joseph never lost faith in Allah; he never deviated from the righteous path. Soon Joseph was reunited with his parents and younger brother in Egypt. Thus from these events we can see how Allah shows favor to His sincere devotees. Devotees of the Lord never lose their faith in Allah



and He protects, guides, and favors them. This story illustrates how Allah is affectionate towards His devotees in a very personal way.

Furthermore it is stated in the Holy Qur'an:

Gayril-magzuubi alay-him wa laz-zaaallin: "Not (the path) of those who earn Your anger nor of those who go astray." (1.7)

Wa many-yu-wallihim yawma-'izin-duburahuu 'illaa muta-harrifal-liqitaalaw mutahay-yizar 'illaa fi-'atin-faqad baaa-'a bi-gazabim-minal-laahi: "If any do turn his back to them on such a day, unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own), he draws on himself the wrath of Allah." (8.16)

Laa khayra fii kasiirimin-naj-waahum 'illaa man 'amara bi-sadaqatin 'aw ma'-ruufin 'aw 'is-laahim-baynannaas / wa many-yaf-'al zaalikab - tigaaa-'a marzaa-tillahi fa-sawfa nu'-tihi 'ajran 'azziimaa: "In most of their secret talks there is no good. But if one exhorts to a deed of charity or goodness or peace-making between the people: to him who does this, seeking the good pleasure of Allah, We shall bestow a vast reward." (4.114)

From all these ayats we can see that Allah loves (3.159) and does not love (5.64); is pleased and displeased (9.100); is full of pity (9.117); shows favor (12.90), anger (1.7) and wrath (8.16); takes pleasure (4.114).

Only a person can have these characteristics. One who is a person, who has individuality can have personal feelings. No abstract light or abstract power can have individual feelings. No impersonal energy can have such variety. The Holy Qur'an explains that Allah loves and loves not, is pleased and displeased, is full of pity, shows favor, anger and wrath, takes pleasure, etc. For displaying all these feelings Allah must have senses, mind and intelligence. He is not less than us. Of course, the senses of Allah cannot be material for they would be temporary like our bodily senses. His senses must be spiritual. Unlike our very limited material senses, they are perfect, unlimited, eternal and beyond contamination and illusion

#### **6.4. Allah has personal desires**

Another proof that Allah is a person is that He has desires. One of the characteristics of a person is that he has desires. Allah wishes all living beings well. He is our ever well-wisher. He desires for us eternal life, perfect knowledge and everlasting bliss. If Allah has desires then He is a person. Of course, His desires differ from ours. His desires are completely spiritual and transcendental. He does not need to work hard for their fulfillment like us. He just desires and it happens.

For example, there are the following statement in the sura "Yunus", or "Jonah" of the Holy Qur'an:

Wa 'inyam-sas-kallahu bi-zurin-fala kashifa lahu 'illa hu / wa 'inyu-ridka bi-khay-rin-fala radda li-fazlih / yusiibi bihi manyashaaa-'u min 'ibaa-dih / wa Huwal-Gafur-ur-Rahim: "If Allah afflict you with some hurt, there is none who can remove it but He and if He desire good for you there is none who can repel His bounty. He strikes with it whom He will of His servant. He is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (10.107)

We can understand from this verse that Allah awards his bounty and favor to whom He desires. If Allah desires to award His favor there is no one who can repel His mercy. This indicates that Allah acts according to His personal desire.

Allah also proclaims in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow" of the Holy Qur'an:

Yaa - Baniii - 'Israaa-'iilazkuruu ni'-matiyallatii 'an-'amtu 'alaykum wa 'awfuu bi-'Ahdiii 'uufi bi-'Ahdikum wa 'iyyaa-ya farhabuun

Wa 'aaminuu bimaaa 'anzaltu musaddiqal-limaa ma-'akum wa laa takuunuu 'aw-wala kaafirim-bih / wa laa tash-taruu bi-'Aayaatii samanan qaliilaa / wa 'iyyaaya fattaquun:

"O Children of Israel! Remember My favor which I bestowed upon you, and fulfill your (part of the) covenant with Me, I shall fulfill My (part of the) covenant with you, and fear none but Me.

And believe in what I reveal, confirming that which you possess already (of the Scripture), and be not first to disbelieve therein, nor sell My revelations for a small price, and keep your duty unto Me." (2.40-41)

In these verses Allah addressed the people of Israel by saying, remember My favor, fulfill your covenant, I shall fulfill Mine, fear Me, believe in My revelations and keep your duty unto Me. This means that Allah desires that the people of Israel remember His favor, fulfill their covenant, fear Him, believe in His revelations and keep their duty unto Him. This and many other similar ayats in the Holy Qur'an where Allah expresses His wishes or gives commands clearly reveal that Allah has desire. This means Allah is indeed a Person, but this should not be misunderstood to mean an ordinary person. Allah is the supreme original Person. Only a person can have a desire. He is the never ending ocean of unlimited pure spiritual desires. It is because Allah has desires that we too have them. Allah is origin of everything. Undeniably, our desires are imperfect and contaminated through association with matter. But if we surrender to Allah without selfish motives our desires will be purified and spiritualized. Existence of desires in Allah demonstrates that Allah is a Person. No abstract light or abstract power can have desire. Desire has to originate from an individual. Allah is unlimited and yet He is a Person simultaneously. This is the inconceivable nature of Allah.

### **6.5. Allah has personal Memory**

From the Holy Qur'an we can understand that Allah always remembers us. He remembers all our good and bad activities. Allah remembers our devotional service and reciprocates

accordingly. He also remembers all our promises and desires. It proves that Allah has memory that is characteristic of a person. Certainly, Allah's memory is not like ours. His memory is unlimited and beyond the limits of time and space. He is never subjected to forgetfulness like us. Therefore He is The Supreme Transcendental Person beyond the limits of matter.

In the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow" of the Holy Qur'an, Allah exclaims,

Faz-kuruni 'az-kurkum washkuru li wa la takfurun: "Therefore remember Me, I (Allah) will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and reject not Me." (2.152)

The word "zikr", or "remember" is very important in this verse. Allah assures us that if we remember Him, He will remember us. Factually Allah always remembers us by His causeless mercy. We are subject to forgetfulness, but He is not. His memory is perfect, complete and unlimited.

It is stated in the sura "Al-Mujadila", or "The Woman who Pleads" of the Holy Qur'an:

Alam tara 'annallaaha ya'-lamu maa fis-samaawaati wa maa fil-'arz? Maa yakuunu min - najwa salaasatin 'illaa Huwa raabi-'uhum wa laa Huwa saadisuhum wa laaa 'adnaa min- zaalika wa laaa 'aksara 'illaa Huwa ma-'ahum 'aynamaa kaanuu summa yunabbi-'uhum- bimaa 'amiluu Yawmal-Qiyaamah / 'innallaaha bikulli shay-'in 'Aliim: "Have you not seen that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and on earth? There is no a secret consultation between three, but He is the fourth of them, nor between five but He is the sixth, nor between less than that or more, but He is with them, wheresoever they may be; and afterward, on the Day of Judgment, He will tell them what they did. For Allah is Knower of all things." (58.7)

Thus secrecy is a relative and limited term among ourselves. There is nothing hidden from or unknown to Allah. Everything is open before Allah's sight. He remembers everything, and afterwards Allah will remind "them what they did."

In the sura "Ta-Ha" we can find following verse:

Qaala 'ilmuhaa 'inda Rabbii fii Kitaab / laa yazillu Rabbii wa laa yansaa: "He (Moses) said: 'The knowledge of that is with my Lord, duly recorded. My Lord neither errs nor forgets.'" (20.52)

Thus the Holy Qur'an show how Allah remember everything. In the 152nd ayat of the 2nd sura Allah says: "Remember Me and I will remember you". This means Allah has individual memory. Allah remembers everything which happens in past. In the Holy Qur'an (58.7) it is explained that Allah knows and remembers all the actions of the living beings, good and bad. So, on the Day of Judgment, He will tell them of what they have done. It is revealed, therefore, Allah can remember. Also it is explained by Moses in (20.52) that Allah neither errors nor forgets. Men may make mistakes or may not remember, but Allah never mistakes and never forgets. This means He has a personal

memory which further reveals and confirms that Allah is an individual Being, not an abstract thing.

## **6.6. Allah has personal Features**

Allah's different qualities, which are described in the Holy Qur'an emphasize the personal aspect of Allah. Undoubtedly, the qualities of Allah are completely spiritual and have nothing to do with the qualities of this material world. In this sense Allah can be called 'One who is devoid of qualities'. This means that He has no quality which resembles material qualities. At the same time, He has qualities which are purely spiritual and cannot be compared to the material qualities. For example, His mercy has no limit, His might no equal; His speed no one can excel and His benevolence no one can emulate. These qualities suggest the existence of A Supreme Spiritual Personality who is completely different from any known personality in this material world.

Thus Allah has different personal features according to the following Qur'anic verses:

Qulil-laahu 'asra-'u makraa: "Say: Allah is more swift in plotting." (10.21)

Fazaa-likumul-laahu Rabbukumul-Haqq: "Such then is Allah, your rightful Lord." (10.32)

Innallaaha la-Zuu-Fazlin 'alan-naasi wa laa-kinna 'aksa-rahum laa yash-kuruun: "Verily Allah is bountiful toward mankind, but most of them are ungrateful." (10.60)

'Inna Rabii Latiiful-limaa yashaaa / 'inna-huu Huwal-'Aliimul-Hakiim: "Verily my Lord is tender to whom He will. For He is the Knower, the Wise." (12.100)

Qaala sawfa 'astag-firu lakum Rabbii / 'inna-huu Huwal-Gaffuu-rur-Rahiim: "He said: 'I shall ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Behold! He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.'" (12.98)

Innallaaha 'Aziizun-Zuntyqaam: "Behold! Allah is Mighty, Able to Requite." (14.47)

Ar - Rahmaanul 'alal - 'Arshistawaa: "The Beneficent One, Who is established on the Throne." (20.5)

Wa la-yansurannallaahu many - yansuruh / 'innallaaha la-Qawiyyun 'Aziz: "Verily Allah will help one who help Him. For Allah is Strong, Almighty." (22.40)

'Aziz means Exalted in power, rank, dignity; Incomparable; Full of might and majesty; Able to enforce His Will. The last signification is the one that predominates here. (9, p. 962)

Innallaaha la-'Afuw-wun Gafur: "Behold! Allah verily is Mild, Forgiving" (22.60)

Wallaahu Ganiyyun Halim: "Allah is Absolute, Clement." (2.263)

Wa kaanal -laahu Shaakiran 'Alima: "Allah was ever Responsive, Aware." (4.147)

Tanziilul-Kitaabi minallaahil . . . Shadiidil-Iqaabi: "The revelation of the scripture is from Allah, . . . the Stern in punishment." (40.2-3)

Fal-Hukmu lillaahil-'Aliyyil-Kabir: "The command belong only to Allah, the Sublime, the Majestic." (40.12)

Thus, Allah is swift (10.21); rightful (10.32); fazlin, or bountiful (10.60); latif, or tender, hakim, or wise (12.100); gafur, or forgiving, rahim, or merciful (12.98); aziz, or mighty, zuntiqam, or able to requite (14.47); rahman, or beneficent (20.5); qawiy, or strong, (22.40); afuw, or mild (22.60); halim, or clement (2.263); shakir, or responsive (4.147); shadid, or stern (40.3) ali, or sublime and kabir, or majestic (40.12). It is obvious that the owner of all these qualities must be a person. Otherwise how can an abstract power be rightful or bountiful or forgiving or clement or responsive? To be responsive Allah must be a Person. Response is possible only between individualities. To say that an impersonal truth has all these qualities is meaningless. There must be a person, Who is Allah.

#### **6.7. Allah plays different personal parts**

After having carefully read the Holy Qur'an, we can't but accept the indisputable fact that Allah is a person, for He is portrayed as a full-fledged, active person throughout. He acts as a friend, witness, judge, guardian, creator, king, patron, helper, hearer, knower, observer, provider, decider etc. One who acts in such a way must be a person. Irrefutably, the activities of Allah are completely spiritual and beyond the limits of mundane time and space. Activities in this material world are a perverted reflection of His transcendental activities. His activities are perfect with no tinge of material contamination. His friendship is everlasting, His judgment is perfect, His creation is complete, His kingship is sublime, His patronship is gracious, His help is selfless, His knowledge is unlimited, His observation is acutest, His provision is exact, His decision is faultless etc. One who is so endowed cannot be a person like us. Allah is not a person in a limited mundane sense. Rather, He is a spiritual person whose personality perfectly corresponds to the above mentioned activities. Therefore nobody can comprehend or even conceive of His personality. And yet He is a person.

Thus the Holy Qur'an describes how Allah plays different personal parts:

Allahu Waliy-yullaziina 'aamanuu: "Allah is the Protecting Friend of those who believe." (2.257)

Wallahu Shahidun 'alaa maa ta'-maluun: "Allah is Witness of what you do." (3.98)

Wa Huwa Khayrul Hakimin: "He is the Best of Judges." (10.109)

'Inna Rabbaka Fa'-aalul-li-maa yuriid: "Behold! Your Lord is Doer of what He will" (11.107)

Falammaaa 'aataw-hu maw-siqā-hum qaalaal-laahu 'alaa maa naquulu Wakil: "Allah is the Warden over what we say." (12.66)

Qulil-laahu Khaliqu kulli shay-'inwa: "Allah is the Creator of all things." (13.16)

Fata-'aalallaahul-Malikul-Haqq: "Then exalted be Allah, the True King!" (20.114)

Fa - 'aqiimus Salaata wa 'aatuz Zakaata wa'-tasimuu billaah / Huwa Mawlaakum - fani'-mal Mawlaa wa ni'-man Nasir: "So establish worship, pay zakat, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protecting Friend. A blessed Patron and blessed Helper!" (22.78)

Wallaahu Samii-'un 'Alim: "Allah is Hearer, Knower." (24.21)

Wa kaanallaahu 'alaa kulli shay-'ir-Raqiibaa: "Allah is Watcher over all things." (33.52)

'Annallaaha bimaa ta'-maluuna Basir: "Allah is Seer of what you do" (2.233)

Wa Huwa Khayrur-Raaziqiin: "He is the Best of Providers." (34.39)

'Innallaaha bi-'Ibaadihii la-Khabiiirum-Basir: "Allah is indeed Observer, Seer of His servants." (35.31)

Huwallaa-hullazii . . . Qudusus . . . Muminul Muhay-minul . . . Jabbarul: "He is the Allah . . . the Holy One, . . . the Keeper of faith, the Preserver of safety, . . . the Compeller." (59.23)

Huwa-laahul Khaliqu'l Bari-'ul Musawiru: "He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, the Fashioner." (59.24)

Wa Huwa Khayrul-fasiiliin: "He is the Best of Deciders." (6.57)

Am 'indahum khazaaa-'inu Rahmati Rabbika 'Azizil Wahab: "Or have they the treasures of the mercy of your Lord, the Mighty, the Bestower?" (38.9)

Thus, Allah is Wali, Friend (2.257); Shahid, Witness (3.98); Hakim, Judge (10.109); Faal, Doer (11.107); Wakil, Warden (12.66); Khaliqu, Creator (13.16); Malik, King (20.114); Mawla, Patron; Nasir, Helper (22.78); Sami, Hearer; Alim, Knower (24.21); Raqib, Watcher (33.52); Basir, Seer (2.233); Raziq, Provider (34.39); Khabir, Observer (35.31); Qudus, Holy One; Mumin, Keeper of faith; Muhay-min, Preserver of safety; Jabbar, Compeller (59.23); Bari, Evolver; Musawwir, Fashioner (59.24); Khayr, Decider (6.57); Wahab, Bestower (38.9). All these attributes reveal the Supreme Personality of Allah. No mere abstract light or power can reciprocate like a friend, king, helper, holy one or judge. There must be a person who is purely spiritual, transcendental and beyond

the imagination of our mind and perception of the senses. He is Allah - our sole Supreme Lord.

### **6.8. Allah has personal Will**

In the Holy Qur'an it is explained that Allah has Iradah, or Will. It is very significant. This means that Allah has his own personal will power. Willing is one of the constitutional attributes of a person. The willing of Allah is certainly different from ours. Our will power is conditioned, limited and fragile. To fulfill our will we must work hard and overcome many impediments. But Allah's will is supreme and transcendental and no one can check its fulfillment. His will determines everything. When Allah wills: 'let it be so'; it becomes so. Such will is indicative of a Supreme Spiritual Person.

Thus it is said in the Holy Qur'an:

Wa lillaahi mulk-us-samawati wal-'arzi wa maa baynahumaa / Yakhluqu maa yashaaa' / Wallaahu 'alaa kulli shay-'in Qadir: "To Allah belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between. He creates what He will. For Allah is able to do all things." (5.17)

Subhaanah! 'Izaa qazaaa 'amran fa-'innamaa yaquulu lahuu Kun-Fa-yakuun: "Glory be to Him! When He (Allah) determines a matter, He only says to it: 'Be!' And it is." (19.35)

There is another important statement in the sura "Al-Buruj", or "The Zodiacal Signs":

Allah is Fa-'alul-lima yurid: "Doer of what He will." (85.16)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Allah's Will is itself the Word and the Deed. There is no interval between them. He does not change His mind. No circumstances whatever can come between His Will and the execution thereof. Such are His Power and His Glory." (9, p. 1931)

So from these ayats of the Holy Qur'an the existence of Allah's personal will power is obvious. Metaphysical philosophy defines a person as "one who has thinking, feeling and willing." Presence of the "will" indicates a person. No impersonal, abstract light or energy can have will. If there is a will, there must be an owner of this will, or a person. Allah is the owner of the supreme will because He is able to do all things just by willing it. This means that Allah is the Supreme Person with Supreme Will Power.

### **6.9. Allah is the Living One**

Another important point which we can find in the Holy Qur'an is that Allah is 'the Living One'. This clearly shows that Allah has His own personal life which indicates existence of Allah as an individual. Individual existence of Allah leaves no room for doubt as to whether He is a person. Unlike ours, Allah's life is eternal, self-sufficient, complete and



perfect. It has nothing to do with the pitiable life of mundane living entities. The life of Allah is the origin of universal life. Material life is a dim, perverted reflection of the spiritual life. After creating the first form of a human being, Allah animated it with His own spirit. Thus life comes from life. We have our personal lives because Allah has His personal life. But the perfect life of Allah as well as His spiritual personality, is beyond comprehension and perception of the mundane mind and senses.

So in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow", the Holy Qur'an states,

Allahu la ilaha illa hu / alhayyu lquyyum: "Allah! There is no God but He, the Living, the Eternal." (2.255)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali in his commentary (9, p. 114) on this verse writes:

"The attributes of Allah are different from anything we know in our present world; He lives, but His life is self-subsisting and eternal; it does not depend upon other beings and is not limited to time and space."

Furthermore in the sura "Al-Mu-min", or "The Believer" it states:

Huwe lhay: "He is the Living One." (40.65)

"The real, self-subsisting Life is only in Allah." (9, p. 1444)

From these ayats we can clearly see that Allah is Lhay, or the Living One, One who is alive, not a dead or an inert abstract reality. "Life" indicates personality. If we say, Allah is the Living One this means Allah is a Person. Because "life" is a symptom of individual existence. Of course, the life of Allah is endless, has no beginning and no end. That is why the Holy Qur'an proclaims, Allah is alhayyu lquyyum, or the Alive, the Eternal. Allah is the Living One, the Alive Person whose life is eternal. He is the supreme Living Being among unlimited living beings and He is the original Eternal among unlimited eternal souls. We cannot trace the beginning of Allah's life. He is never born and never dies. Allah is the Eternal Alive Supreme Person.

#### **6.10. Allah has personal Power**

The Holy Qur'an describes Allah as Almighty or One Who has unlimited power. We cannot even imagine how powerful Allah is. By His inconceivable power He keeps innumerable planets on their respective orbits. Furious storms, hurricanes, the concomitant ominous streaks of blinding lightning, disastrous cyclones, coupled with cataclysmal volcanic eruptions are the slightest exhibition of His awe-inspiring incalculable power. With the unlimited power He possesses, Allah performs multifarious activities. Allah's possession of such an attribute firmly establishes Him as a person. Obviously, He is not a person like us with limited power and strength but a Supreme Powerful Person Who is inexorably progressive.

Thus the Holy Qur'an states,

Innallaha 'ala kuli shay-'in-Qadir: "Allah is Able to do all things." (2.20)

Innallaha la-Qawiyun 'Aziz: "Verily Allah is Strong, Almighty." (22.40)

Thus Allah is Qadir, or able to do everything, Qawiyun, Strong and Aziz, Almighty. Allah has Qudrat, Power and creates everything in the heavens and on the earth, He gives life to the dead, creates moving and non-moving living entities. He is supremely Almighty. This means that Allah has ability and power to do anything He desires. This power belongs to Him, it is His personal Power. Thus Allah is a Person who has the ultimate Power.

#### **6.11. Allah has personal Faculty of speech**

There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an which describe the speech of Allah. He spoke with the angels, prophets and mankind. So, if one has the faculty of speech, then He is a person. Arguably, Allah is an extraordinary Person Who is beyond this limited material world. Our power of speech is very limited and what little we are able to speak is grievously erroneous. But the speech of Allah is perfect and He can speak with the whole universe. One with such power of speech must be a Supreme Person. His personality and His speech alike are transcendental.

For instance, in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow", it states:

Allah "said to the angels: 'I will create a viceroy on the earth.'" (2.30);

Allah also "narrates unto (Muhammad) the best narratives." (12.3)

Thus in the 30th ayat of the 2nd sura the word qala, "said" is very important. This means that Allah has personal reciprocation through kalam, speech with angels, the Prophet and mankind. This also means that Allah has His personal power of speech. He is the One who creates kalam, speech. "The speech" means reciprocation. It indicates at least two personalities, one who speaks and one who hears. Allah spoke with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.). The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.). is a person this means Allah is also a Person. Allah is the Supreme, He cannot be less than the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.). If human beings have personality how can we say that Allah does not have personality? How dare we deprive Allah from something. When the Holy Qur'an states, "Allah speak" this means that Allah is a Person, not an abstract reality. Because an abstract reality is speechless. Thus according to the Holy Qur'an, Allah is Active Alive Speaking Person.

#### **6.12. Allah has personal Faculty of hearing**

In the Holy Qur'an the description of Allah's faculty of hearing is a recurrent theme. Generally people pray in the mosque, "O Allah, please forgive all our sins." Allah hears

and He forgives, for He is merciful. If one hears, then he is a person. But Allah's hearing is not like ours. His faculty of hearing is neither conditioned nor limited. Even if we pray in our heart silently Allah hears us. He hears every single whisper within the whole creation. This proves Allah to be The Supreme Spiritual Person.

Thus the Holy Qur'an states:

Wallahu Sami-'un 'Alim: "Allah is One Who hears all things." (2.224)

Wallahu Sami-'un 'Alim: "Allah is Hearer, Knower." (24.21)

This means that Allah has an individual capacity samaa, to hear everything. Ability to hear indicates personality. The Holy Qur'an proclaims, "Wallahu Sami-'un 'Alim." This means Allah hears and He knows. When Allah hears the prayers of His devotees He reciprocates. There are many stories in the Holy Qur'an which show us how Allah spoke with the prophets. For example, with Moses, Abraham, etc. When they replied to Allah He heard them. Thus Allah has personal reciprocation with the prophets through speaking and hearing. This individual capacity of Allah to hear gives further proof that He is a Person, not an abstract senseless, deaf and dumb reality.

### **6.13. Allah has personal Faculty of sight**

The Holy Qur'an also describes Allah's faculty of sight. Allah is able to see everything; nothing is hidden from His sight. Foolish people try to hide their crimes and sinful activities but Allah sees everything. Nothing can obscure His vision or escape His notice. Our eyes fully depend on light. In darkness we cannot see even ourselves. But Allah's vision is independent. Such extraordinary ability to see can belong only to The Supreme Spiritual Person.

Thus it is explained in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow":

Wataqullaha wa'-lamu 'annallaha bima ta'-maluna Basir: "Fear Allah and know that Allah sees well what you do." (2.233)

Then again Allah states:

Inni bima ta'-maluna Basir: "Behold! I am Seer of what you do." (34.11)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

". . . They were told that Allah was watching over them all with personal solicitude implied in the singular pronoun "I"." (9, p. 1276)

This means Allah has the personal ability basar, to see everything. Basar or ability to see indicates personality. Allah said in the Holy Qur'an, "Bima ta'-maluna Basir", "I am Seer of what you do". This means that seeing of Allah is not an abstract observation but it is

vision of a personality. Allah sees what we do at every moment of our lives and He reciprocates accordingly. Allah is the Witness of our activities. Out of His causeless mercy, He personally watches and guides us. This is Allah - the Seer, the Witness, the Watcher which, in the ultimate sense, means He is a Person. He personally sees, He can't be an abstract observing us. No. Allah is the personal Seer, One Who witnesses, One Who watches with His all-seeing eyes, all this clearly informs us, not only is Allah a person but He is the Supreme Transcendental Person.

#### **6.14. Allah has personal Identity**

Allah described in the Holy Qur'an as an individuality. He many times clearly said "I" which define Him as an individual, or a person.

For example, in the sura "Az-Zariyat", or "The Winds That Scatter" of the Holy Qur'an it is mentioned:

Allah said,

Wa ma khalaqtul Jinna wal-'insa 'illaa liya'-buduun

Ma 'uriidu minhummir Rizqinw-wa ma 'uriidu 'any-yut-'iinuun:

"I have created the jinns and humankind only that they may worship Me.

I seek no livelihood from them, nor do I ask that they should feed Me." (51.56-57)

The term Ma, or "I" is very significant here. The speaker who is saying "I" must have His own personality. Any person who has any knowledge of grammar can understand that "I" refers to a personality. Therefore, the Personality of God, speaking to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.), uses "I" while describing His own transcendental identity. "I" has a specific meaning, it is not a vague term which can be whimsically interpreted. "I" when spoken by Allah, refers to the Supreme Personality of God and nothing else.

#### **6.15. Allah has personal Knowledge**

The word Alim, or "Knower" in the previously mentioned ayat (24.35) is very important. This defines Allah as one who knows everything. Our knowledge is limited and imperfect. But His knowledge is all-encompassing and perfect. It is yet another attribute which supports Mahaprabhu's statement in relation to the personal aspect of Allah.

Thus the Holy Qur'an says:

Wallahu bi - kulli shay-'in 'Alim: "Allah is Knower of all things." (24.35)

Wa 'indahu mafatihul Gaybi la ya'-lamuha 'illa hu / wa ya'-lamu ma fil-bari wal-bahr / wa ma tas-qutu minw-waraqatim 'illa ya'-lamuha / wa la habatin fi zulumatil-'arzi / wa la rat-

binw-wa la ya-bisin 'illa fi Kitabim-Mubin: "With Him are the keys of the invisible. None but He knows them. And He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything wet or dry but (it is noted) in a clear record." (6.59)

Thus, Allah is Alim, Knower, that is, He knows everything, visible and invisible, manifest and unmanifest. This means that Allah has absolute knowledge about everything and about Himself also. He has knowledge about His identity. Metaphysical philosophy defines a person as "a self-objectifying consciousness". Allah, in the ultimate sense, is the Person, as He knows His own individuality and is aware of who He is. Allah is the absolute individual Person with the ultimate inconceivable consciousness. He is fully conscious of His own individuality and is fully conscious of every other individual

#### **6.16. Allah is the best Person**

One more point which the Holy Qur'an mentions is that Allah is the best among personalities. When the Holy Qur'an compares Allah to other persons it is logical to say that Allah is also a person. However, He is a spiritual person. Such verses leave no doubt that Allah is the best person among all persons.

For instance, the Holy Qur'an says:

Wallahu Khayrul-makirim: "Allah is the best of plotters." (8.30) and

Wa innallaha la-huwa Khayrur- raziqin: "Verily Allah, One Who is best of all who make provision." (22.58)

It is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an that Allah is Khayrul-makilim and Khayrur-raziqin, or "Allah is best of all who plot" and "best of all who makes provision". In this way the Holy Qur'an compares Allah with other persons who make plots and persons who make provisions. But we can compare only comparable things. We can compare a person with a person but we cannot compare a person with an impersonal energy. When the Holy Qur'an compares Allah with persons this clearly indicates that Allah is not an impersonal energy but also must be a person. Otherwise how can an impersonal energy be best among personalities? Such statements make no sense. Therefore, from above mentioned ayats we can understand that among all persons who plot Allah is the best Person and among all persons who make provisions Allah is again the best Person.

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#### **6.17. Allah's seven excellent names**

The personal nature of Allah is revealed through seven isma-e-hasna (excellent names), or attributes. Four are called Sifat-e-Lazmi fit zat-e-Allah, or "Attributes essential in the being of Allah" and three are called Sifat-e-Sabuti fil zat-e-Allah, or "Attributes

substantiating the being of Allah". The first four are Haiyat (Life), Ilm (Knowledge), Qudrat (Power) and Iradah (Will).

The first isma-e-hasna (excellent name) is Haiyat (Life). Allah is not an abstract being, but living God. He is not as most people are led to believe, simply a Supreme Light, a Supreme Power, an impersonal energy. Allah is all these but He is overwhelmingly a lot more.

The second isma-e-hasna is Ilm (Knowledge) which reveals Allah as a knowing being. Allah is Alim (Knower). He knows Himself and all His creation perfectly. This means Allah is the living being not an abstract energy. He has absolute total knowledge of every single aspect of His own unlimited individual identity. This is a definition of individuality. Allah is individuality with individual attributes, knowledge and consciousness.

The third isma-e-hasna is Qudrat (Power), which reveals Allah as Qadar (Almighty).

The fourth isma-e-hasna is Iradah (Will). Allah has individual will power.

Thus Allah is the Supreme Person Who knows Himself and His position perfectly: Who is the supreme eternal living One Who has unlimited knowledge, power and will, Who makes Himself known through his kalam (speech).

The next three are Samaa (Hearing), Basar (Seeing) and Kalam (Speaking). These three isma-e-hasna (excellent names) - Kalam, Samaa, Basar - confirm the being of Allah as a Person. For it is a person who speaks, hears and sees as a living being. These three names are called isma-e-sabuti bil zat-e-Allah (names proving the being of Allah).

Therefore, Allah is one; but richly so. His oneness is enriched with isma-e-hasna (excellent names), which reveal His nature as a living personal God Who is inconceivable and unknowable by such limited beings as us.

By summarizing all the above mentioned points we can assert that Allah, as revealed in the Qur'an, is not an abstract being but a being who has haiyat (life), ilm (knowledge), qudrat (power), iradah (will) and who is able to kalam (speak), basar (see) and samaa (hear). Saying that Allah cannot be a person is offensive since it is tantamount to calling Him deaf, dumb, blind etc. Moreover, it contradicts the Qur'anic statements. Actually He has life which is eternal, knowledge which embraces everything, power which is unexcelled, will which determines everything and He is able to speak with the entire universe, to see and hear everything with no effort. These attributes clearly indicate that Allah is not a person in the ordinary material sense. Considering Allah an ordinary mundane person is a severe limitation of His personality. He is an unlimited Supreme Transcendental Person beyond our imagination and perception of our mundane limited senses.

### **PART THREE**

## Discussion

The saintly Muslim was a molla (Muslim priest) and a learned scholar. He wanted to discuss with Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and establish the impersonal feature of God on the basis of the Holy Qur'an. When the saintly Muslim put points forward to established that Allah is not a person on the basis of the Holy Qur'an, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu respectfully offered counter points to wipe aside this incomplete conclusion. Whatever points the Muslim scholar put forward, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, by quoting the same Qur'an, offered counter points proving that Allah has personal features. Mahaprabhu explained to the Muslim, that the Holy Qur'an does present impersonalism, but finally it establishes the personal God.

Then Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "The Holy Qur'an accepts the fact that ultimately there is only one God. He is full of opulence and He has beautiful dark colour. According to the Holy Qur'an, the Lord has a supreme, blissful, spiritual form. Allah is the Absolute Truth, the all-pervading, omniscient and eternal being. He is the origin of everything; creation, maintenance and dissolution come from Him. He is the original shelter of all gross and subtle cosmic manifestations. Allah is the Supreme Truth worshipped by everyone." (49, Madhya-lila, 18.190-193)

## CHAPTER SEVEN

Allah is One

Inna mallahu 'ilahunw-wahid:  
"For Allah is One God."  
(The Qur'an 4.171)

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "The Qur'an accepts the fact that ultimately there is only one God."

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.190)

In this statement Mahaprabhu stresses the existence of one God. Thus he dismisses the misconception that many gods exist and rejects polytheism or worship of many gods. Shree Chaitanya believes and preaches that there is only one God for everyone and all others are His servants.

One of the missions of Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) was to establish worship of one God and stop polytheism which was prevalent in Arabia then. Therefore the Holy Qur'an firmly establishes oneness of God.

In the sura "Al-Kahf", or "The Cave", of the Holy Qur'an, Allah declares:



Qul 'innama 'ana basharum-mislukum yuha 'ilaya 'annama 'ilahukum 'ilahunw-wahid:  
"Say (O Muhammad): I am but a man like yourselves. It is revealed to me by my Lord  
that your God is only one God." (18.110)

The first principle and pillar of faith in Islam is the belief in the existence of One, and only One, Great, Eternal, Self-Subsisting, Unseen God. This creed, called Tauheed, is expressed as "La ilaha illallah" - "No god but Allah." Allah is one. He does not beget, nor is He begotten. He is the Creator and Destroyer. He is the embodiment of Truth, Love, Peace and Justice.

The Holy Qur'an states,

Wa ilahukumu ilahun wahid / la ilaha illahu: "Your God is One God; there is no God but He." (2.163)

Inna mallahu 'ilahunw-wahid: "Allah is only One God." (4.171)

Wa qale llahu la tettahidu ilahayni tnayin / Innama huwa ilahun wahid / Fa iyyaya farhabun: "Allah has said: Take not (for worship) two gods. There is only One God. Then fear Me, (and Me alone)." (16.51)

Allahu la 'ilaha 'illahu lahul 'asma 'il-husna: "Allah! There is no God but He. To Him belong the most beautiful names." (20.8)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Allah is the One and the most beautiful things we can think of are referable to Him. His names refer to His attributes which are like titles of Honor and Glory." (9, p. 880)

It is stated in the sura "Al-Imran", or "The Family of Imran":

Shahid allahu 'annahu la 'ilaha 'illahu wa walmala-'ikatu / wa 'ulul-'ilmi qa-'imam-bil-qist / la ilaha 'illahu wa l-'Azizul-Hakim: "Allah bears witness that there is no God but He. And so do the angels and those endowed with knowledge. Maintaining His creation in justice, there is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise." (3.18)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes in his commentary:

"Allah Himself speaks to us through His revelations (through angels) and through His Creation, for all Nature glorifies Allah. No thinking mind, if it only judges the matter fairly, can fail to find the same witness in his own heart and conscience. All this points to the Unity of Allah, His exalted nature, and His wisdom." (9, p. 144)

It is stated in the sura "As-Saffat", or "Those Ranged in Ranks":

Inna 'ilahakum la-wahid: "Surely your God is One!" (37.4)

"That divine Message is summed up in the gospel of Divine Unity, on which the greatest emphasis is laid: "verily, verily your God is One". It is a fact intimately connected with our life and destiny. Your Lord is one Who cares for you and cherishes you; you are dear to Him. And He is One; it is only He that you have to look to, the source of all goodness, love and power. You are not the sport of many contending forces or blind chances. There is complete harmony and unity in heaven, and you have to put yourselves into unison with it - by discipline in ranks, by unity of plan and purpose in repelling evil, and by concerted action in promoting the Kingdom of Allah. Here is the mystery of the manifold variety of creation pointing to the absolute Unity of the Creator." (Commentary by Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 9, p. 1341)

It is explained in the sura "Al-Ikhlās", or "Purity":

Qul huwa - allahu ahad

Allahu samad

Lam yalid wa - lam yulad

Walam yakun lahu kufuwan ahad:

"Say: He is Allah, the One,

Allah, the Independent.

He begets not, nor was He begotten.

And there is none like unto Him." (112.1-4)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Here we are specially taught to avoid the pitfalls into which men and nations have fallen at various times in trying to understand Allah. The first thing we have to note is that His nature is so sublime, so far beyond our limited conceptions, that the best way in which we can realize Him is to feel that He is a Personality, "He", and not a mere abstract conception of philosophy. He is near us; He cares for us; we owe our existence to Him. Secondly, He is the One and Only God, the Only One to Whom worship is due; all other things or beings that we can think of are His creatures and in no way comparable to Him. ... This is to negative the idea of Polytheism, a system in which people believe in gods many and lords many. Such a system is opposed to our truest and profoundest conceptions of life. For Unity in Design, Unity in the fundamental facts of existence, proclaim the Unity of the Maker." (9, p. 2028)

Furthermore the Holy Qur'an says:

Subhanah / huwe ilahu lwahidu lqahhar: "Be He glorified! He is Allah, the One, the Absolute." (39.4)

Wa ma min ilahin illa ilahun wahid: "There is no god except one God." (5.73)

Huwe lhay / la ilaha illahu: "He is the Living One. There is no God but He." (40.65)

In this way the Holy Qur'an explains, that there is only one God. God means the Supreme Being. The Supreme Being means nobody can be higher or on the same level, otherwise the word "Supreme" has no meaning. There cannot be two Supremes. Allah, God means One. God is the Supreme One and all others are under His supervision. The word "God" excludes the possibility of any one else being God. A statement that, "There are two Gods, or many Gods" is meaningless and illogical. No one is equal to or above Allah. He is the primeval Lord. God is one without a second. He is like the vaidurya stone, which changes color yet still remains one. All scriptures claim that the ultimate goal of life is love for God. But this love for God presupposes that God is one. When we speak about love of God we mean supreme spiritual love which is far different from material love which is based on sense gratification. The supreme love is meant for the Supreme Being, the Supreme One. The supreme love cannot be for two persons. The supreme love suggests the Supreme One, who is superior to everyone. We cannot love two persons with supreme love, we can only love one. Therefore, the Supreme Lord is one without a second. All bona fide scriptures of the world describe one God. There cannot be a Jewish God, a Christian God, a Muslim God, a Hindu God. The scriptures of the world speak about the same one God, but in different languages. They give Him different names like Jehovah, Saviof, Allah, Krishna, etc., but they approach the same Supreme Being, the same one God. We should understand, that the Supreme Lord is not a Jew, Christian, Muslim or Hindu. He is above of all these designations. He is situated in transcendence. He is the One Supreme God and we are all His servants.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

Allah is full of opulence

Wallahul Ganiyu:

"Allah is Rich."

(The Qur'an 47.38)

"Allah is full of opulence", Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.190)

Mahaprabhu explained to the Abdullah Patan that one of the definitions of Allah is that He is One Who possesses all opulence. For instance, all wealth belongs to Allah; no one can be richer than Him. All power belongs to Allah; no one can be stronger than Him. All

fame belongs to Allah; no one can be more famous than Him. All beauty belongs to Allah; no one can be more beautiful than Him. And all knowledge belongs to Allah; no one can be more knowledgeable than Him. Thus, that Allah is all-opulent is one of the definitions of the Supreme Lord.

So the Holy Qur'an says,

Wa lillahi ma fis-samawati wa ma fil-'arz / wa 'ilallaahi turja-'ul-'umuur: "To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and earth; and to Allah all things return." (3.109)

Wa lillahi gaybu ssamawati wa lard / wa ilayhi yurja'u lemru kulluh: "To Allah do belong the invisible of the heavens and the earth, and to Him goes back every affair." (11.123)

Wa lillahi lmasriqu we lmeqrib: "Unto Allah belong the East and the West." (2.115)

Lahu ma fi ssamawati wa ma fi lard / wa huwa l'aliyyu l'adim: "To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on the earth, and He is the Sublime, the Tremendous." (42.4)

Wallahul Ganiyu: "Allah is Rich." (47.38)

Allah is the origin of everything. All and all manifest from Him only. All opulence which exists in the material world is only a fraction of His opulence. God is full in six opulences: He has full strength, full fame, full wealth, full knowledge, full beauty and full renunciation. There are many persons who are either very rich, or powerful, or beautiful, or famous, or learned, or detached, or a combination of these opulences, but no one can claim that he possesses all riches, all strength, all fame, all beauty, all knowledge and all renunciation without limit. Only Allah can claim this because He is the Supreme Being. In other words, the opulence of Allah is unlimited. It is impossible to comprehend the greatness of Allah and His opulence. He is full in all opulences. He is the Proprietor of all wealth and the Owner of all energy. There is no one equal to Him because His transcendental opulence is immeasurable. He is the source of everyone's opulence, and therefore no one can equal or excel Him in any opulence. His opulence is superexcellent. Only by purification of the heart through pure devotional service can one appreciate the opulences of the Lord, and when one is acquainted with His opulences, he is no longer attracted by any other. The Supreme Lord is in a transcendental position, above everything within the material world. His opulences: wealth, power, fame, beauty, wisdom and renunciation are all universally purifying. The more we discuss His qualities and opulences, the more we purified. In the material world, the opulence possessed by a material person are never fixed. Today, one may be a very rich man, but tomorrow without warning one may be poor; today one may be very famous, and the next day infamous. Materially obtained opulences are never fixed, but all six opulence perpetually exist in the Supreme Lord, not only in the spiritual world, but in this material world also. God's fame is fixed, and His books of wisdom are honored. Everything pertaining to the Supreme Lord is eternally existing. The opulence of the Supreme Lord remains as it is in the spiritual world; only in the material world is everything dissolved.

## CHAPTER NINE

Allah has a beautiful color

Sibgatallah:

"(We take our) color from Allah."

(The Qur'an 2.138)

"Allah has a beautiful dark color," Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu added.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.190)

Here Mahaprabhu mentions another attribute of Allah, namely color. He describes Allah as possessing a beautiful dark color. Everything comes from and belongs to Allah. It is amazing how wonderfully Allah has colored our mortal world. It will be illogical and unjust on our part to think that Allah is colorless. If millions of insignificant creatures of this material world can be so wonderfully and beautifully colored, then what to speak of Allah, Who is the greatest. Definitely, the color of Allah is spiritual, transcendental and has little to do with temporary colors of this world. His color is eternal, ever-fresh and amaranthine. It is almost impossible for us to even imagine the beauty of Allah's color.

In the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow" of the Holy Qur'an there are specific verse which confirms this statement of Mahaprabhu's:

Sibgatallah wa man 'ah - sanu minallahi sibgah: "(We take our) color from Allah and who is better than Allah at coloring?" (2.138)

The word sibgat is very significant in this verse. The root meaning of this word is color. In this verse it is explained that none can surpass Allah in lending color to this universe. There is no color that Allah doesn't have and none that He is not adorned by. Had He not been so adorned, then He will be less than His creation. The very thought of such offensive minimization of Allah is wholly unacceptable by anyone who professes to be a true Mussalman. This is because no Muslim will dare contradict the Qur'anic statement: 'Allahu Akbar'(Allah is Great). Since Allah is the greatest, it is but natural for any sane person to put forward this question: How can the Great Allah be colorless, the epithet being an agent which reduces His unsurpassed Greatness to mere abstraction? The answer is that Allah is colorfully beautiful. Now, it is small wonder that some color of the material world should resemble His color, as Allah is the source of everything, including color. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) said to his asabas [associates]: "We take our color from Allah." This means that the color of the Arabs analogously resembled Allah's color. From the representation of Allah's complexion by the Arabs we can safely conclude that Allah is of a beautiful dark complexion.

According to the ancient scriptures the color of God resembles the color of the monsoon cloud. Of course, this color of God is not material but spiritual. In this way the ancient scriptures further explain that the color of God is like the lightning. This means that God is effulgent. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) met Allah he saw dazzling effulgence emanating from God. (131, p. 108) Therefore, Allah has a dazzling dark color. But we never see any dark color, which is dazzling. It seems contradictory. That is because the color of Allah is not material, but spiritual, transcendental beyond the scope of the mundane senses and mind. From this point of view, we can understand why some Muslim scholars claim that Allah has no color. This means He has no material color, but He has spiritual color. Allah is full in all opulences, everything comes from Him and belongs to Him. So how is it possible for Him not to have color? If He does not have color then it follows that He will be incomplete and imperfect because something will be missing in Him which is not possible. According to all recognized revealed scriptures, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) and the Holy Qur'an, Allah has a spiritual, dazzling, dark color beyond the perception of the material senses and the imagination of the mundane mind.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

Allah has a spiritual form

Lillahil Masalul 'Ala:

"Allah's is the Sublime Similitude."

(The Qur'an 16.60)

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "According to the Holy Qur'an, the Lord has a supreme, blissful, spiritual form."

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.191)

Now Mahaprabhu begins discussing Allah's form. Mahaprabhu emphatically said spiritual form, when he said "form". Saying that Allah has spiritual form is as good as saying that Allah is formless, because Allah has nothing to do with forms of this temporary illusory world. That Allah is formless means that He has no form which resembles the temporary forms of this world subjected to birth, disease, old age and death. Since Allah is eternal, unlimited, has neither beginning nor end, was never born and is deathless, how can He have a material form? Therefore Allah has a spiritual form which is perfect, unmanifest, unseen and inconceivable. The understanding that Allah has a spiritual form is a better understanding. Considering Allah formless is, to say the least, an inferior thought. Since the statement that Allah has no form deprives Him of something which even the lower creatures have, such a statement is offensive. Therefore the most perfect understanding is that Allah has a form which is absolutely spiritual and has little to do with any material form whatsoever.

Let us see if there are any verses in the Holy Qur'an which support this statement of Shree Chaitanya.

### 10.1. Allah has Eyes

The form of Allah is different from material bodies, which are full of disease and suffering. Moreover, they are limited and perishable. Allah's form is supreme, blissful, eternal, unlimited and spiritual. Each spiritual sense of Allah can perform all the functions of all His other senses. Allah has sense perceptions and His form is described in the Holy Qur'an as having various senses and parts.

In the Holy Qur'an we find numerous verses which describe the bodily features of Allah. For example, Allah's ability to see and the nature of His eyes are described in the following way:

Wallaahu bimaa ta'-maluuna Basiir: "Allah sees well whatever you do." (2.265)

Wasna-'il-fulka bi-'a'yunina wa wah-yina: "Build the ship under Our (Allah's) eyes and by Our inspiration." (11.37)

This particular verse from sura "Hud", or "The Prophet Hud" corresponds to the story about the prophet of Allah, called Noah (11.25-48). Noah was sent by Allah to his nation. When Noah proclaimed his prophethood, he said to the people, "I am here to impress upon you the need to serve none but Allah, for I fear that service to anyone else will bring upon you severe punishment on the Day of Judgment."

But the chieftains of his nation, who disbelieved, said: "You are a mortal like us. No one will follow you and we deem you a liar."

"O my people," Noah replied, "Allah knows best what is in everyone's heart and he will pay back accordingly."

They said: "O Noah! Now bring upon us that wherewith you threatens us, if you are truthful."

Noah replied: "Only Allah will bring it upon you if He wants and you will not find means for escape."

They again said: "You have invented it."

Then Allah said to Noah: "No one of your nation will believe but him who has believed already. Be not distressed because of what they do. Build the ship under My eyes and by My inspiration and speak not unto Me on behalf of those who do wrong. They will be drowned."



So Noah was ordered to construct a great Ark or Ship, a heavy vessel to remain afloat in the great Flood, so that the righteous could be saved in it. Noah began building the ship, and every time the chieftains of his nation passed him by, they made a mock of him. The ridicule of the sinner, from their own point of view, was natural. Here was a Prophet turned carpenter! Here was a plain in the higher reaches of the Mesopotamian basin, drained by the majestic Tigris, over 800 to 900 miles from the sea Arabian Gulf in a straight line! Yet Noah talks of a flood like the Sea! Thus the mocking continued until water started gushing forth. This was a sign of the coming Flood, water gushing up from the ground as well as falling from the sky.

Allah said to Noah: "Load therein two of every kind, a pair (a male and female), and your household.

Noah cried unto his son who was standing in the distance: "O my son! Come ride with us, and be not with the disbelievers."

His son said: "I shall betake me to some mountain that will save me from the water."

Noah replied: "This day there is none who would be saved from the commandment of Allah but him on whom He bestows mercy." And the wave came between them, he was washed away to drown like all the other unbelievers. Thus, the commandment of Allah was fulfilled. The ship came to rest upon the mount Al-Judi.

Allah said to Noah: "Go down from the mountain with peace from Me and blessings upon you and the nations that will spring from those with you."

So those who truly seek Allah's light and guidance and sincerely bend their will to His Will are easily enabled to become the recipients of Allah's grace. Despite their human frailties in them, they are promoted to higher stages on account of their faith, trust, and striving after the right course of actions. They are given Allah's Peace, which gives the soul true high mountainous calmness and strength accompanied by the river of blessings that incessantly flow from spiritual life. Since Noah had served Allah with great devotion, Allah directly guided him, instructed him; and even bestowed him with confidential knowledge of His eyes.

Thus, there are clear evidences from the Holy Qur'an that Allah has Aynun, "Eyes". Of course, the Eyes of Allah are different from our eyes. His Eyes are spiritual, unrestricted and have unlimited potency. Unlike our eyes which are very limited and imperfect. We cannot even see our hand in a dark room. Allah can see the seeable and unseeable. He observes every corner of His creation.

## **10.2. Allah has the sense of hearing**

There are a number of verses in the Holy Qur'an which explains that Allah hears everything. The fact that Allah can hear automatically suggests that He possesses the sense of hearing; but His hearing and the sense of hearing alike are transcendental. His

sense of hearing is neither limited nor conditioned like ours. Allah can simultaneously hear every murmur and sigh in the whole creation.

For instance, in the 50th ayat of the 34th sura ("Saba", or "The City of Saba") it is written that Allah "hears all things":

Innahuu Samii-'un-Qarib: "It is He Who hears all things, and is (ever) near."

Wallaahu Samii-'un 'Alim: "Allah is Hearer, Knower." (2.224)

Thus, Allah is the owner of spiritual senses of hearing. Allah's spiritual Ears are eternal, perfect and have unlimited potency. He can hear everything that is hearable and unhearable.

### 10.3. Allah has the sense of speech

In the Holy Qur'an there are many verses which describe how Allah spoke with angels, Prophets and mankind. If one can speak, then he must have the sense of speech. Since Allah can speak, He does have the sense of speech; but it is spiritual and beyond the limits of time and space. He can simultaneously speak with the whole universe which abounds in a wide variety of languages.

For example, in the sura "Al-'Imran", or "The Family of 'Imran" of the Holy Qur'an, it is stated:

Innallaziina yashta-ruuna bi-'ahdillaahi wa 'aymaanihim saman-an-qalilan 'ulaa-'ika laa khala'aaqahum fil-'Aakhirati wa laa yukallimu-humullaahu wa laa yanzuru 'ilayhim Yawmal Qiyamati wa laa yuzakkihiin / wa lahum 'azaabun 'aliim: "As for those who sell the faith they owe to Allah and their own solemn plighted word for a small price, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter. Allah will neither speak to them nor look at them on the Day of Judgment, nor will He cleanse them. They shall have a grievous chastisement." (3.77)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Even on sinners - ordinary sinners

### 10.4. Allah has a Face

There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an which describe Allah's face. A scrutinizing study of these verses leaves no doubt as to whether Allah has a face.

A prominent Muslim scholar Al-Ashari (9th century AD), declared in his creeds:

"We confess that Allah has a face, without asking how."

For instance, the Holy Qur'an says:

Wa laa tat-rudil-laziina yad-'uuna Rabbahum bil-gadaati wal-'a-shiyyi yuriiduuna wajhah:  
"Sent not away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face."  
(6.52)

Walla - zina sabarub - tiga wajhi Rabbi-him: "Those who patiently persevere, seeking the Face of their Lord." (13.22)

Wasbir nafsaka ma-'allazina yad-'una Rabbahum - bil - gadati wal-'ashiyi yuriduna wajhabu: "Keep yourself along with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face." (18.28)

Zalika khayrul-lillazina yuriduna wajhallahi: "That is best for those who seek Allah's face." (30.38)

Wa ma 'ataytum-min zakatin-turiduna wajhallahi: "But that which you give in charity, seeking Allah's face, will increase manifold." (30.39)

One meaning of the word "wajh" is "face" or "self". Abdullah Yusuf Ali in his commentary to 30.39 writes:

"Seeking the Face of Allah, i. e. out of our pure love for the true vision of Allah's own Self." (9, p.1189)

The word "self" indicates individuality. This means Allah has individuality; He is not an abstract object. If we apply the above mentioned interpretation to the words wajhallahi, "Allah's face" this will mean that Allah is individual, that is to say He is a Person. Thus the expression "Allah's face" means Allah is a Person and He has a Face.

Furthermore it states in the Holy Qur'an:

Wa lillahi lmasriqu wa lmegrib / fa aynami tuwellu fatemma wejhu llah: "To Allah belong the East and the West, and whithersoever you turn, there is Allah's Face." (2.115)

Kullu shay - 'in halikun 'illa wajhah: "Everything will perish except His (Allah's) face." (28.88)

Kullu man 'alay-haa faan

Wa yabqa wajhu Rabbika Zul-Jalali wal-Ikram:

"All that is on earth will perish.

But will abide (forever) the Face of your Lord full of Bounty and Honor." (55.26-27)

From all these quotations the existence of Allah's Wajh, or "Face", is undeniably apparent. We can understand from the above mentioned verses (55.26-27) that everything in this material world is temporary but only Allah's Face is eternal. The word Wajh, "Face" is the symbol of the Personality and expresses personality. Also the word Ikram, "Honor" is very important in these verses. Two meanings are prominent in this word Ikram. The first meaning is of generosity as proceeding from the person whose attribute it is, and the second meaning is of honor, as given by others to the person whose attribute it is. (7, p. 1400) One who has a face and is called Ikram must be a person. Allah's Face is of the most beautiful beauty of all beauty. His all beautiful face gleams with a smile so radiant it immediately captures and melts the hearts of His devotees. It's stated that anyone who sees the beautiful smile of the Supreme Lord will never forget it. Thus, they obtain perfection as they never forget Allah.

#### 10.5. **Allah has Hands**

In the Holy Qur'an we can find a number of verses which are clearly indicative of Allah's possession of hands. Not only that, in one of the verses the right hand of Allah has particularly been referred to; which means Allah has left hand too. According to the Holy Qur'an Allah has two hands. The existence of His hands make it only too clear that Allah has a form.

A prominent Muslim scholar Al-Ashari (9th century AD), declared in his creeds:

"We confess that Allah has two hands, without asking why."

Also the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) states in the Holy Qur'an:

Qul 'innalfazla biyadillah: "Say: Generosity is in Allah's hands." (3.73)

Qala ya 'Iblisu ma mana-'aka 'an-tasjuda lima khalaqtu biyaday: "He (Allah) said: 'O Iblis! What prevents you from prostrating yourself to one whom I have created with My hands?'" (38.75)

Wa ma qadarullaaha haqqa qadrihi wal-'arzu jamii-'an-qabzatuhuu Yawmal-Qiyaamati wasama-watu matwiyatum biyaminih: "No just estimate have they made of Allah, such as is due to Him. On the Day of Judgment the whole of the earth will be but His handful, and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand." (39.67)

We can understand from this verse that on the Day of Judgment Allah will be able enclose the whole earth in the palm of His hand and he will roll up the heavens with His right hand.

Furthermore the Holy Qur'an says:

Yadullahi fawqa 'aydihim: "The hand of Allah is above their hands." (48.10)

Tabarakalazi biyadihil - mulk / wa huwa 'ala kulli shay-'in qadir: "Blessed be He in Whose hands is the sovereignty, and He is able to do all things." (67.1)

Wa qaa-latil Yahudu yadullaahi magluulah / Gullat 'ay-diihim wa lu-'inuu bima qaaluu / Bal Yadaahu mabsuuta - taani yun - fiqu kayfa yashaaa: "The Jews say: 'Allah's hand is tied up.' Their hands are tied up and they are accursed for saying so. Nay, both His hands are spread out wide in bounty." (5.64)

So the Holy Qur'an gives a clear description of the hands of Allah and His handful. Of course, some people try to give secondary or metaphorical interpretation of the hands of Allah, but first of all, we can see how Allah explains that He has a right hand, this means He must also have a left hand. The second point is that even if we use a metaphorical expressions, these expressions are based on factual objects which exist. For example, we used to say, "The power is in the hands of the King", because the King has hands. The lion is also the king of the animal kingdom but we never say, "The power is in the hands of the lion", because it sounds ridiculous. But we can not joke with Allah. If Allah himself gives so much stress to the existence of His hands, how do we dare to deny their existence? Thus Allah has two hands, right and left.

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN**

Allah is the Absolute Truth

Dalika bi enna llaaha huwe lhaqqu:  
"That is because Allah, He is the Truth."  
(The Qur'an 22.62)

"Allah is the Absolute Truth," Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued.

(Chaitanya-chritamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.191)

Here Mahaprabhu establishes Allah as the Absolute Truth. The Absolute Truth is eternal, complete and perfect. It is unchangeable in contrast to the relative truths of this material world. We cannot understand reality by studying the relative truths of this illusory world. To understand reality we must study the Absolute Truth. The scriptures reveal to us the Absolute nature of Allah. One must carefully study the scriptures in order to realize the true nature of Allah. It is quite difficult to obtain such realization on one's own. Discovery of the hidden treasures of Al-Qur'an is made possible only through approaching realized souls and listening to them with rapt attention. Such association with realized souls can certainly take one closer to the Absolute Truth Who is Allah - our sole Supreme Lord.

So in the Holy Qur'an we can find the following ayats:

Wallahu Ghaniyun Halim: "Allah is the Absolute, the Clement." (2.263)

Wa 'innallaha la-huwal Ganiyul Hamid: "Verily Allah, - He is the Absolute, the Owner of praise." (22.64)

Dalika bi enna llaha huwe lhaqqi / wa enna ma tad'una min dunihi huwe lbatilu / wa enna llaha huwe l'aliyyu lkabir: "That is because Allah - He is the Truth; those invoked besides Him are false. Indeed Allah is the High, the Great." (22.62)

The emphatic construction of this verse calls attention to the fact that Allah is the only real Truth. All else is like shadows that pass away. This world is a mere shadow or perverted reflection of the real spiritual world. Our eternal love for God is pervertedly reflected here as "love," which in fact is low craving for temporary material objects. By wrongly considering the perverted material love the all in all we have forgotten the real spiritual love and believe in the reality of this illusory world. The only solution to our problems and sufferings is reestablishment of our forgotten relationships with the true Reality - the Absolute Truth.

Furthermore it is stated in the sura "Ta-Ha":

Fata-'aalallaahul Malikul Haqq! Wa laa ta'-jal bil-qur'aani min-qabli 'anyyuqzaaa 'ilayka wahyuh / wa qur-Rabbi zidnii 'ilmaa: "High above all is Allah, the King, the Truth! Be not in haste with Qur'an before its revelation to you is completed, but say, 'O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge.'" (20.114)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Allah is above every human event or desire. His purpose is universal. But He is the Truth, the absolute Truth; and His kingdom is the true kingdom, that can carry out its will. That Truth unfolds itself gradually, as it did in the gradual revelation of the Qur'an to the Holy Prophet. But even after it was completed in a volume, its true meaning and purpose only gradually unfold themselves to any given individual or nation. No one should be impatient about it. On the contrary, we should always pray for increase in our own knowledge, which can never at any given moment be complete." (9, p. 907)

Thus one must with patience and determination seek the true meaning of the Holy Qur'an. One must always consider himself foolish and unqualified before Allah. One must understand that his senses are imperfect and that his ability to comprehend is limited. Only by the mercy of the Supreme Lord can one appreciate His attributes. The hidden treasure of Al-Qur'an is revealed only to those who are completely devoted and surrendered to Allah.

Further the Holy Qur'an says in the sura "An-Nur", or "Light":

Yawma - 'iziny - yuwafihi-mullahu dinahumul - haqqa / wa ya'-lamuna 'anallaha huwal Haqul Mubin: "On that day Allah will pay them back their just dues, and they will realize that Allah is the Manifest Truth." (24.25)

Thus Allah is the very essence of Truth and Reality. He is the Absolute Truth, of which all relative truths are mere reflections. Here it is explained that Allah is not an abstract power but Haqul Mubin, or Manifest Truth. All truths, or knowledge manifested from Allah. Perfect knowledge, which is revealed in the scriptures obviates the need to invent any kind of knowledge. One must carefully study all the scriptures recognized by the world to understand the true nature of Allah.

Next in the sura "Al-Hajj", or "The Pilgrimage" of the Holy Qur'an it is stated:

Zalika bi-anallaha huwal Haqu wa 'anahu yuhyil-mawta wa 'anahu 'ala kulli shay-'in Qadir: "This is so, because Allah is the Truth. It is He Who gives life to the dead. He is able to do all things." (22.6)

All the magnificent and well-defined pageantry of life and Nature emphasize the Truth, or Reality behind them viz., Allah. They will perish, but He is eternal. All relative truths of this illusory world will perish in due course of time; only the Absolute Truth will continue to exist eternally. Therefore, to understand the nature of this temporary world, we must realize the true nature of Allah.

Furthermore, the sura "Luqman" of the Holy Qur'an states:

Zalika bi-'anallaha huwal Haqu wa 'anna ma yad-'una min-dunihi-batilu wa 'anallaha huwal 'Aliyul Kabir: "That is because Allah is the Truth and whatever else they invoke beside Him is Falsehood, and because Allah is the Sublime, the Most Great." (31.30)

All the wonderful phenomena that we witness in creation point to One True God. He is the only Eternal Reality, the Absolute Truth. Any attempt to portray any other gods as superior or equal to Him is Falsehood, for He is higher and greater than anything we can imagine. The Absolute Truth is beyond imagination and perception of the mundane senses. Only by the causeless mercy of the Lord can one realize Him. Allah reveals Himself to a sincere seeker only to the extent that he deserves it.

Next in the sura "An-Nisa", or "The Women" of the Holy Qur'an it is stated:

Wa man 'asdaq minallahi hadisa: "And who is more true in statement than Allah?" (4.87)

Each of Allah's statement is an eternal truth, because it has been pronounced by the Absolute Truth Himself. One should understand every statement of Allah as it is, without adulteration or concoction. Allah has blessed us with clear instructions in His books of knowledge, that we may understand His supreme nature without deviation.

Furthermore, it is said in the sura "Luqman":

Inna wa dallahi haqun - fala: "Verily, the promise of Allah is the very truth." (31.33)

Al-Haqq, or the Absolute Truth means that one plus one is equal to one, and that one minus one is also equal to one. Nothing can be added and nothing can be subtracted from the Absolute Truth. This is the case in the Absolute World. The Absolute Truth is the Complete Whole. The Complete Whole must have everything within our experience and beyond our experience, otherwise it can not be complete. This means that the Complete Whole has individuality, form, senses, etc. The Complete Whole is not formless. If He were formless, then He could not be the Complete Whole. Therefore, the Absolute Truth is, in the ultimate issue, a person. The Absolute Truth is realized in three phases of understanding, namely the impersonal all-pervasive Spirit; the localized aspect of the Supreme within all living entities; and the Supreme Person. Allah is the Supreme Truth of all other categorical truths.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

Allah is all-pervading

Huwa az-zahir wa huwa al-batin:

"He is the Outward and He is the Inward."

(The Qur'an 57.3)

"Allah is all-pervading," Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.191)

Here Mahaprabhu explains that Allah is all-pervading. Allah is inside and outside everything. One cannot turn in any direction without encountering Allah. He is omnipresent; but He never loses His oneness. Such is the inconceivable potency of Allah. He is One Supreme Being and simultaneously present everywhere. Thus in the Holy Qur'an Allah is referred to as al-Muhee, or all-pervading, omnipresent Being.

So, it is stated in the sura "Al-An'am", or "Cattle":

Wa huwal-lahu fis-samawati wa fil-'arz ya'-lamu sirakum wa jahrakum wa ya'-lamu ma taksibun: "He is Allah in the heavens and in the earth. He knows what you hide, and what you reveal, and He knows what you earn." (6.3)

It is absurd to think that Allah is present only in the heavens. He is certainly present on the earth too. Indeed, He is omnipresent.

Furthermore in the sura "Al-Hadid", or "Iron" it is said:

Huwa al-awwal wa huwa al-akhir / wa huwa az-zahir wa huwa al-batin: "He is the First and the Last, and the Outward and the Inward; and He is the Knower of all things." (57.3)



The following tradition in Sahih Muslim is significant for an understanding of this verse. The Prophet (peace be on him) said:

"You are the First, so that there was nothing before You; and You are the Last, so that there is nothing after You; and You are Outward, or Evident, so that there is nothing above You, and You are the Inward, or Hidden, the Knower of the hidden things, so that there is nothing hidden from You."

It is stated in the same sura "Al-Hadid", or "Iron" of the Holy Qur'an:

Wa huwa ma-'ruju fiha / Wallaahu bima ta'-maluuna basiir: "And He is with you wherever you may be. And Allah sees well all that you do." (57.4)

This is yet another evidence of the omnipresence of Allah. Allah is always with each and everyone of us, no matter where we are. He watches all of us, mercifully allowing us to act according to our desires. Allah has granted us a little independence; but we should never misuse such independence by disobeying Him. We must always remember that Allah is omnipresent and that He is a witness to every activity that we perform and every little thing that we do.

There is another interesting verse in the sura "Qaf":

Wa laqad khalaqnal-'insaana wa na'-lamu maa tuwas-wisu bihi nafsu / Wa nahnu 'aqrabu 'ilayhi min hablil-wariid: "We verily created man, and We know what suggestions his soul makes to him. For We are closer to him than his jugular vein." (50.16)

Thus Allah created man, and gave him his limited independence. Allah knows the inmost desires and motives of man even better than man does himself. He is closer to a soul than man's own jugular vein. The jugular vein is the big trunk vein, one on each side of the neck, which brings the blood back from the head to the heart. The two jugular veins correspond to the two carotid arteries which carry the blood from the heart to the head. Allah is closer to the soul than the jugular vein in the body and He is aware of the soul's every desire.

Allah is the all-pervading personality who dwelling within everything, including every single atom. Allah is one, yet by His inconceivable potency He is present everywhere, just as the sun is one but it appears in many places at once through its light. Allah is directly all-pervading by His diverse material and spiritual energies. Although He is present in His eternal abode, He is all-pervading and everything is situated within Him. Although Allah is present everywhere, He is inconceivable by our material senses. He is present everywhere as the Supreme Truth by His all-pervading features. He is all-pervading and therefore He can see everyone's activities, He is unlimitedly able to exert His influence over all places and times, and over all living beings. Like the omnipresent material sky, Allah is all-pervading inside and outside of everything, by the omnipresent rays of His effulgence. Fire is already present in wood, but by a certain process, fire in

kindled. Similarly, God is all-pervading. He is everywhere, and since He may come out from everything, His supreme consciousness pervading the entire universe. Since the Lord is all-pervading, He is also situated in eternal time and there is nothing existing outside His knowledge. The all-pervading nature of Allah can never be within the limited knowledge of a living entity.

## **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

Allah is omniscient

Llaha wasi 'un 'alim:

"Allah is All-embracing, All-knowing."

(The Qur'an 2.115)

"Allah is omniscient," Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.191)

According to Mahaprabhu, Allah is omniscient. The term "omniscience" means "all-knowing." So, Allah knows everything. His knowledge is unlimited and perfect. Since Allah is a transcendental Personality His knowledge is also beyond the limits of time and space. The knowledge of Allah is eternal and absolute, while our knowledge is temporary and relative. The Holy Qur'an abounds in evidence of Allah's omniscience.

So the Holy Qur'an says:

Inna llaha wasi 'un 'alim: "Behold! Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing." (2.115)

Inna hu ya'lamul jahra wa - ma yakhfa: "Behold! He knows what is manifest and what is hidden." (87.7)

Inna llaha khabirum bi ma ta 'malun: "Behold! Allah is informed of what you do." (5.8)

It is stated in the sura "Al-An'am", or "Cattle":

Wa 'indahu mafatihul lghaybi la ya'lamuha illa hu / wa ya'lamu ma fi lberri we lbahr / wa ma tasqutu miw waraqatin illa ya'lamuha wa la hebbatin fi dulumati lardi wa la retbin wa la yabisin illa fi kitabim mubin: "With Him are the keys of the invisible, the treasures that none knows but He. He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf does fall but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything wet or dry but (it is noted) in a clear record." (6.59)

The word "mafatih" is very significant in this verse. Mafatih is a plural of either miftah which means a key, or maftah which means a treasure. Allah is the treasury of

knowledge. He is omniscient. Only by His mercy is the hidden treasure of Al-Qur'an revealed to us.

Furthermore it is said in the Holy Qur'an:

Wa lillahi gaybus samaawaati wal-'arzi . . . Wa ma Rabbuka bigafilin 'amma ta'malun: "To Allah do belong the unseen (secrets) of the heaven and the earth. . . . Behold! Your Lord is not unaware of what you do." (11.123)

'Alimu l'gaybi we ssahadah / elkabiru l'muta'al: "He is the Knower of the invisible and the visible. He is the Great, the High Exalted." (13.9)

Wa'-lamu 'anallaha bikulli shay-'in 'Alim: "And know that Allah is aware of all things." (2.231)

It is stated in the sura "Al-Hadid", or "Iron":

Ya'-lamu ma yaliju fil-'arzi wa ma yakhruju minha wa ma yanzilu minasama-'i wa ma ya'-ruju fiha: "He knows what enters within the earth and what comes forth out of it, and what comes down from the sky and what ascends up to it." (57.4)

Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments this verse following way:

"Allah watches over man and observes his deeds. His knowledge comprehends all, the earth, heavens, what is in them or above them or whatever is in between them, comes out of them or goes into them, for 'not a leaf does fall but He knows it'." (9, p. 1688)

Furthermore it is explained in the Holy Qur'an:

Wa huwa 'Alimum bi-zatisudur: "And He is the Knower of all that is in the hearts." (57.6)

Wa huwa bi-kulli shay-'in 'alim: "And He is the Knower of all things." (2.29)

Wa mallahu bi-gafilin 'ama ta'-malun: "And Allah is not unaware of what you do." (2.74)

Wallahu 'Alimum biz-zalimin: "And Allah is aware of evildoers." (2.95)

Wa ma taf-'alu min khayrin fa-'innallaha bihi 'Alim: "And whatever good you do Allah is aware of it." (2.215)

Wallahu ya'-lamu wa 'antum la ta'-lamun: "And Allah knows, you know not." (2.232)

Ya'-lamu ma bayna 'aydihim wa ma khalfahum / wa la yuhituna bi-shay-'im min 'ilmihi 'ila bima sha: "He knows that which is in front of them and that which is behind them while they can possess nothing of His knowledge except what He wants them to." (2.255)

This means that Allah knows His creatures' observations and their feelings in their day-to-day life. It also means that Allah knows the past, the present and the future. He knows all past activities of all living entities and He knows what awaits them in the future. Since Allah knows everything about our past activities He awards us accordingly.

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes in his commentary:

"Allah's knowledge is absolute, and is not conditioned by Time or Space. To us, His creatures, these conditions always apply. His knowledge and our knowledge are therefore in different categories, and our knowledge only gets some reflection of Reality when it accords with His Will and Plan." (9, p. 115)

Wallahu bima ta'-maluna 'Alim: "And Allah is aware of all that you do." (2.283)

Innallaha la yakh-fa 'alayhi shay-'un-fil-'arzi wa la fis-sama: "From Allah, verily nothing is hidden on the earth or in the heavens." (3.5)

Fa-'innallaha 'alimum-bil-mufsidim: "Allah has full knowledge of those who do mischief." (3.63)

Wallahu 'alimum-bil-mutaqin: "And Allah is aware of those who do right." (3.115)

Innallaha 'alimum-bizatis-sudur: "Allah knows well all the secrets of the heart." (3.119)

Innallaha kana 'ala kulli shay-'in Shahida: "Allah is ever Witness to all things." (4.33)

Wa la yaktumu nallaha hadisa: "And they can hide no fact from Allah." (4.42)

It is explained in the sura "At-Takwir", or "The Folding Up":

Wallahu yak-tubu ma yubayi-tun: "And Allah records what they plan by night." (4.81)

Thus Allah knows the inner, unapparent workings of events better than any human mind can hope to. Nothing is hidden from Allah. Despite the fact that He is one, He knows the hearts of everyone. He is closer to each of us than our own jugular vein; He knows very well all the desires present in our hearts - so great is the inconceivable potency of Allah who is omnipresent and omniscient.

The Holy Qur'an also says:

Innallaha kana bima ta'-maluna Khabira: "Allah is ever informed of all that you do." (4.94)

Wa'-lamu 'annallaha ya'-lamu ma fi 'anfusikum fah-zaruh: "And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so beware of Him." (2.235)

So, in the Holy Qur'an Allah is called Alim - All-Knowing or Omniscient. He knows everything about everyone at all times. All knowledge belongs to Him. He is the origin of all knowledge.



Knowledge, memory and forgetfulness come from Him. If someone accepts God, He gives that person the knowledge to understand Him. If someone rejects God and thus wants to forget Him, Allah gives that person forgetfulness to forget Him. If someone serves God with love and devotion Allah gives such a devotee memory to remember

Him always. We can understand Allah only by His causeless mercy. If we please God by our devotional service He will give us sufficient knowledge and intelligence to realize Him. Allah is present everywhere and knows the necessities of everyone. God is omniscient. Allah can understand everyone's desires, because He is within the heart of everyone, even within the atom. He knows everything about the past, the present and the future. However, no one knows Him completely; nor can He be completely described. Such is the wonderful inconceivable quality of Allah.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Allah is eternal

Allahu . . . Huwal Qayyum:

"Allah! . . . He is Eternal."

(The Qur'an 3.2)

"Allah is the eternal being," Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.191)

Here, Shree Chaitanya emphasizes two aspects of Allah:

- 1) Allah is eternal and
- 2) Allah is a being.

Allah is the Supreme Being. The living entities are conscious beings, but Allah is the Supreme Being amongst all beings. He is the Supreme Conscious Being amongst all conscious beings and He is Supreme Eternal amongst all eternal beings.

Thus Mahaprabhu explains that Allah is eternal. Eternity is a distinctive characteristic of the spiritual world, in contrast to the material world, which is temporary. In the material world everything has a beginning and an end. Every living entity takes birth and dies. Conversely, the spiritual world has neither a beginning nor an end. The word eternal means beginningless and endless. Therefore, Allah was never born and will never die. He is beginningless and endless. Never was there a time in the annals of history when Allah did not exist. His existence is eternal. He has no beginning and has no end.

So in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow" there is a statement about the eternity of Allah:

Allahu la ilaha illa hu / al-Hayyul Qayyum: "Allah! There is no God but He, - the Living, the Eternal." (2.255)

It is clearly explained here that Allah is the living or the alive one which means that He is a Being who is alive rather than a thing which is not alive or abstract. That Allah is alive is the symptom of a Being.

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"The attributes of Allah are different from anything we know in our present world. He lives, but His life is self-subsisting and eternal. It does not depend upon other beings and is not limited to time and space. The attribute of Qayyum includes not only the idea of "Self-subsisting" but also the idea of "Keeping up and maintaining all life"." (9, p. 114)

Furthermore in the sura "Al-Ikhlās", or "Purity" it is mentioned:

Allahu Samad

Lam yalid wa - lam yulad:

"Allah, the Eternal, Absolute.

He begets not, nor was He begotten." (112.2-3)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes in his commentary:

"Samad is difficult to translate by one word. I have used two, "Eternal" and "Absolute". The latter implies: 1) that absolute existence can only be predicated of Him; all other existence is temporal or conditional; 2) that He is dependent on no person or things, but all persons or things are dependent on Him." (9, p. 2028)

There is another verse in the sura "Al-Imran", or "The Family of 'Imran":

Allahu . . . Huwal Qayyum: "Allah! . . . He is the Eternal." (3.2)

Thus in the Holy Qur'an Allah is called Qayyum, the Eternal. Eternal means no beginning and no end. Allah is an ever-existing Being. There is no time when He did not exist and His existence will never come to end. Allah is Lam yulad, He was not begotten. He is never born and never dies. He is eternal and indestructible, and He continues to live after the destruction of this temporary material world. Allah is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. He existed in the past, exists in the present and will exist in the future. Allah has not come into being, does not come into being and will not come into being since He is ever-existing. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing and primeval, that is to say, there is no trace in history of His coming into being. He therefore has no past, present or future. Among all eternal beings, Allah is the supreme eternal primeval One. He has no beginning and no end. He has no origin, for He Himself is the origin of everything. He has no cause, for He Himself is the cause of all causes. There is no particular date at which God was born. Nor can anyone trace out the history of God's appearance because He is beginningless. He existed before the material creation. The nature of the Lord is eternal, blissful and full of knowledge. Allah is immortal, imperishable and eternal, and is the constitutional position of ultimate happiness. He is the original eternal enjoyer amongst all other enjoyers, and is the eternal friend of the living entities. He existed prior to the creation and He is transcendental to the material nature.

## **CHAPTER FIFTEEN**

Allah is the origin

Badi-'us-samawati wal-'arz:

"The Originator of the heavens and the earth!"

(The Qur'an 2.117)

"He is the origin of everything," added Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.191)

Now, Mahaprabhu explains that Allah is the origin of everything. Everything comes from Allah. Nothing exists independently of Him. He is the Supreme Origin of creation. Here the origin is referred to all life and energies - living energy, or living beings and inert energy. The origin of everything by definition has no origin but always exists. Everything originates from Him; but He never loses His equilibrium and completeness. He is inexhaustible and complete.

Thus it is propounded in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow" of the Holy Qur'an:

Badi-'us- samawati wal-'arz / wa 'iza qaza 'amranfa - 'inama yaqulu lahu "Kun" fayakun: "The Originator of the heavens and the earth! When He (Allah) decrees a thing, He says to it only: 'Be!' And it is." (2.117)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes in his commentary:

"The materialists might say that primeval matter was eternal; other things, i. e. the forms and shapes as we see them now, were called into being at some time or other, and will perish. When they perish, they dissolve into primeval matter again, which stands as the base of all existence. We go further back. We say that if we postulate such primeval matter, it owes its origin itself to Allah." (9, p. 47-48)

Next, the sura "Al-An'am", or "Cattle" states:

Badi-'us-samaawaati wal-'arz . . . Wa khalaqa kulla shay' / wa Huwa bi-kulli shay-'in 'Aliim: "Wonderful Originator of the heaven and the earth. . . He created all things, and He has knowledge of all things." (6.101)

Here the word "bada'a" is used as in (2.117) for the creation of the heavens and the earth, and "khalaqa" is used for creation of all things. Bada'a goes back to the very primal beginning, as far as we can conceive it.

It is stated in the sura "An-Nisa", or "The Women":

Qul kullum-min 'indillah: "Say: All things are from Allah." (4.78)

If we look to the ultimate Cause of all things, all things come from Allah. But if we look to the proximate cause of things, our own merit is so small, that we can hardly claim credit for good ourselves with any fairness. (Commentary by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 9, p. 236)

In the ancient scriptures it is said that only the Lord alone exists, and all other's existence depend upon Him. He is the generating origin for everyone's existential capacity. Allah is the origin of all emanations. Everything is born out of Him. He is the source of creation. God is the origin of whatever we find. Nothing can manifest itself in this material world which is not in God. Everything flows from Him only. He is the supreme origin and everything is emanating from Him. He is without origin, He has no beginning, middle or end. He is the origin of all living entities and the resting place of everything. God is the origin of all creations, all features, all auspicious opportunities, all austerities and penances, all energies and all manifestations. Those who know that Allah is the origin of everything, they can understand the process of creation. God is the origin of the material senses and sense objects, of the subtle and gross material ingredients. The origin of all life is the effulgence of the Supreme Lord. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin and He is the prime cause of all causes.

## **CHAPTER SIXTEEN**



Allah is the Creator, Maintainer and Destroyer

Allahulazi khalaqakum suma razaqakum suma yumitukumsuma:

"Allah is He Who created you and then maintained you, then will cause you to die."

(The Qur'an 30.40)

Then Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Creation, maintenance and dissolution come from Allah."

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.192)

Here Mahaprabhu explains that Allah is the sole creator, maintainer and destroyer of the universe. Allah performs everything through His inconceivable potencies. When the time was ripe, He created the universe. He then undertook to maintain it with all the planets on their orbits and supply sustenance for all living beings. When the duration of the existence of the universe is over, Allah will destroy it. He is the supreme controller and everything depends on Him. Certainly, Allah acts as the creator, maintainer and destroyer only in relation to the material world because the spiritual world is never created, it is eternal and it is never destroyed.

Thus in the Holy Qur'an we can find plenty of evidence of these points. For instance, in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow", it states:

Ya-'ayu-han-nasu'-budu Rabba-kumulazi khalaqakum walazina min-qablikum la-'alakum tataqun.

'Alazi ja-'aia lakumul-arza fira-shanw-wasama-'a bina-'a / wa 'anzala minas-sama-'i ma-anfa-'akh-raja bihi minas samarati rizqal-lakum:

"O mankind! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those who came before you that you may become righteous.

Who has made the earth your couch, and the sky your canopy, and sent down rain from the sky, thereby producing fruits as foods for you." (2.21-22)

Furthermore, in the sura "Qaf" there is the following verse:

Wa laqeb halaqna ssamawati wa larda wa ma baynahuma fi sittati ayyamin wa ma messana mil lugub: "Verily We created the heavens and the earth, and all between them in six Days, and nor did any sense of weariness touch Us." (50.38)

As for the Creation in six Days, in (22.47), we are told that a Day in the sight of Allah is like a thousand years of our reckoning, and in (70.4), the comparison is with 50,000 of our years.

It is also explained in the Holy Qur'an:

Huwal-lazi khalaqa lakuma fil-'arzi jami-'a / sumas-tawa 'ilas-sama-'i fasawa-hunasab-'a samawat: "It is He Who has created for you all things that are on earth. Then He turned to the heaven and fashioned it into seven firmaments." (2.29)

Yakhluqu ma yasha: "He creates what He will." (5.17)

Zalikumul-lahu . . . Khaliqul kulli shay-'in fa'-budu / wa huwa 'ala kulli shay-'inw-wakil: "Such is Allah, . . . the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He takes care of all things." (6.102)

It is stated in the sura "Yunus", or "Jonah":

Innahu yabda-'ul-khalda suma yu-'iduhu: "Behold! He produces creation, then reproduces it." (10.4)

So Allah's creation is not a simple act, once done and finished with. It is continuous, and there are many stages.

Next, it is said in the sura "Al-Ra'd", or "Thunder":

Qulil-lahu Khaliqul kulli shay-'in wa huwal Wahidul Qahar: "Say: Allah is the Creator of all things and He is the One, the Almighty." (13.16)

Then, in the sura "Al-Hashr", or "The Gathering" is the following verse:

Huwal-lahul - Khaliqul Baari 'ul-Musawiru: "He is Allah, the Creator, the Shaper out of naught, the Fashioner." (59.24)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Allah's attributes of Goodness and Power having referred to, we are now told of His creative energy, of which three aspects are here mentioned. The point is emphasized that He does not merely create and leave alone; He goes on fashioning, evolving new forms and colors, and sustaining all the energies and capacities which He has put into His Creation, according to various laws which He has established.

Khalaqa is the general term for creation, and the Author of all Creation is Khaliq. Baraa implies a process of evolving from previously created matter or state: the Author of this process is Bari-u, the Shaper. Sawwara implies giving definite form or color, so as to make a thing exactly suited to a given end or object: hence the title Musawwir, Fashioner for this shows the completion of the visible stage of creation." (9, p. 1726)

Furthermore, the Holy Qur'an said:

Alladhi khalaqa fasawwa: "Who creates, then disposes." (87.2)

Anta khay-rur-raziqin: "O Allah our Lord! . . . You art the best of Sustainers." (5.114)

Iny-yasha yuz-hibkum wa ya 'ti bi-khalqin-jadid: "If He will, He can remove you and bring (in) some new creation." (14.19)

Allahu lazi khalaqakum suma razaqakum suma yumitukum suma yuhyikum: "It is Allah Who has created you; further, He has provided your sustenance; then He will cause you to die; and again He will give you life." (30.40)

Allah is not only the Creator of the universe, but the Destroyer as well. The manifested cosmic nature is created at a certain period by the will of the Lord. It is maintained for some time and then it is annihilated by His will. He extends His transcendental potency for the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the cosmic world. The creation, maintenance and dissolution of this cosmic manifestation are due to the existence of the Supreme Lord. Nonetheless, the Lord is unaffected by all these changes in the material elements. The Supreme Lord is the original cause of creation, maintenance and dissolution. Everything emanates from Him, everything is maintained by Him and everything is dissolved in Him. He is the ultimate controller of creation, maintenance and dissolution. Thus creation, maintenance and dissolution are created by His will.

## **CHAPTER SEVENTEEN**

Allah is the shelter

Qul a'udhu bi - rabbin nasi:

"Say: I seek shelter in the Lord of mankind."

(The Qur'an 114.1)

"He is the original shelter of all gross and subtle cosmic manifestations," said Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.192)

As Mahaprabhu states, Allah is the shelter of everything. None but He is the real shelter of everyone. Having forgotten Allah, we now seek the shelter of our family, relatives, friends, community, nation or country, none of whom are capable of sheltering us. Who can save us from the inevitable grip of death? When it arrives, no one can dodge it. Only Allah can extricate us from all material suffering, including death by providing us His shelter.

Shelter signifies the constant protection and sustenance that Allah provides to this material world and its residents. Within the material world, there are gross manifestations, which are visible to the mortal's eye of flesh and subtle manifestations

which are normally invisible. For example, the Qur'an refers to Jinns and Angels who are subtle and normally invisible creatures.

It is mentioned in the sura "Al-Falaq", or "The Daybreak" of the Holy Qur'an:

Qul a'udhu bi - rabbil falaqi: "Say: I seek shelter in the Lord of the Daybreak." (113.1)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"In Allah's created world, there are all kinds of forces and counter-forces, especially those put in motion by beings who have been endowed with some sort of will. The forces of good may be compared to light, and those of evil to darkness. Allah can cleave the depths of darkness and produce light, and therefore we should cast off fear and take refuge in divine guidance and goodness." (9, p. 2030)

Next, it is said in the sura "An-Nas", or "Mankind":

Qul a'udhu bi - rabbil nasi

Malikin nasi

Ilahin nasi:

"Say: I seek shelter in the Lord of mankind,

The King of mankind,

The God of mankind." (114.1- 3)

The previous verse (113.1) brings to our attention the necessity of seeking Allah's protection against external factors which might affect an individual. Here mankind is being viewed as a whole and the need for protection from internal factors is pointed out. For this reason, the threefold relationship which man has with Allah is mentioned:

1) Allah is Rabb which means Lord, Maker, or Cherisher. Allah sustains one and cares for him. He provides one with all the means for his growth and development, and for his protection against evil;

2) Allah is Malik which means King, or Ruler. Allah has the prerogative to guide man's conduct, and lead him to well-being. He has made laws, which man must abide by.

3) Allah is Ilahi which means God, or Judge. To Him mankind must return. Allah judges man according to his deeds in this life and determines his next destination. He is the goal of life, and the only Being Whom man must always worship.

Thus man could and should seek Allah's protection against evil.

Furthermore, it is stated in the sura "Al-Muminun", or "The Believers":

Rabbi a'udhu bika min hamazati ash - shayatini

Wa a'udhu bika rabbi 'an yahduruni:

"O my Lord! I seek shelter in You from the incitement of satanic ones,

And I seek shelter in You, O my Lord, lest they should approach me." (23.97-98)

Thus no one can side-step evil and demoniac influences without Allah's aid and protection. One must not only be impervious to all promptings of evil, but one must shun its proximity. In retaliation on evil, or even in curiosity to discover what evil is, one is very likely to be victimized by it. One should avoid going near it or anything which brings it near him. In order to succeed in doing so, one must take complete shelter of the Supreme Lord.

Also it states in the Holy Qur'an:

Wa 'imma yanzaganaka minash-shaytani nazgun-fasta-'iz billah / innahu Sami un 'Alim:  
"If a suggestion from the devil wound you, seek shelter in Allah. For He is the Hearer, the Knower." (7.200)

Wa 'imma yanzaganaka minash shaytani nazgun-fasta-'iz billah / Innahu huwa Sami 'ul 'Alim: "If a whisper from the devil reach you, seek shelter in Allah. He is the One Who hears and knows all things." (41.36)

The sura 113 "Al-Falaq", "The Daybreak", derives its name from a word in the first verse. It is a prayer to Allah for protection from evils especially supernatural ones proceeding from the unknown. The Prophet is asked to pray and to seek shelter in Allah, the Lord of the Daybreak. Daybreak is a phenomenon by which Allah changes the dark night unto bright day thus reducing the power of darkness by His command. The reference to the Rabbil Falaqi, "Lord of the Daybreak", is very significant in this early Meccan sura since the pagan Arabs had a strong belief in witchcraft which was usually practiced in the dark hours of the night. Therefore, the Prophet, and through him all believers, are asked to seek shelter in Allah so that nothing evil or cruel can harm them. (135, pp. 130-131)

The sura 114 "An-Nas", "The Mankind", takes its name from a word in the first verse. This sura is the second of al-Muawwadhatayn (two prayers for shelter and protection). Like the sura al-Falaq, here also the Prophet is asked to seek shelter in Allah, the Lord of mankind. "The Lord of mankind" here means the Maker, the Cherisher and the Sustainer of man. By referring to Allah as "the King of mankind", it is meant that He is the Ruler, the Legislator and the Governor of the human race. Allah is the God of mankind, the only being entitled to worship and none should be associated with Him in worship as an agent, son or daughter of God. (135, p. 43)

Mankind, by nature, is very insignificant in the face of the massive forces of nature and weak to resist the temptations of Satan. Therefore human beings need to cling tenaciously to Allah's shelter. Under the shelter of Allah the humans are secure and protected. Allah can give complete shelter because He is beyond the material energy.

Allah is the only shelter of the cosmic manifestation and the supreme shelter for all living entities. Giving up such shelter, the living entities are deluded by the material energy, forgetting God. Therefore, without His shelter, nothing can exist. He is the shelter of the whole universe. The Lord is the only shelter of fearlessness for the surrendered soul. One can not save himself from the cruel hands of death in the material world without having surrendered himself to the Lord. The Lord is impartial to all circumstances of the sufferings of the living entities, but to one who takes shelter at Him, the Lord gives proper protection, and takes such a living entity to His eternal abode. God is the shelter of everything - this is the verdict of all scriptures. Everything is resting in Allah's energy, therefore, He is the supreme shelter. Without His shelter nobody can be happy. He is the ultimate goal of shelter and therefore one should take shelter of God either for protection or for the annihilation of distress. Let everyone take shelter of the supreme omnipotent God. That is the ultimate perfection of life.

## **CHAPTER EIGHTEEN**

Allah is worshipped by everyone

Wa ma khalaqtul jinna wal-'insa 'illa liya'-budun:  
"I have created the jinns and men, that they only may worship Me."  
(The Qur'an 51.56)

Then Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu pointed out, "The Lord is the Supreme Truth worshipped by everyone."

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.193)

Here Mahaprabhu stresses that Allah is the Supreme Lord worshipped by everyone. Actually everyone ought to worship and serve Allah. It is supreme law for everyone and supreme duty of everyone. The constitutional position of the soul is to worship and serve the Supreme Lord. When we forget God we begin to serve and worship something else since no one can be inactive. In forgetfulness of our supreme duty, we begin to serve and worship material objects. As a result, we are frustrated and miserable. Nothing can satisfy us and bring us happiness unless we engage ourselves in service to God. It is supreme happiness and the goal of one's life.

This human life offers us the opportunity to return to Allah by worshiping Him. Worship of Allah is man's supreme goal. Actually, everyone is directly or indirectly worshiping the Supreme Lord.

So in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow" of the Holy Qur'an it is clearly explained:

Ya-'ayu-han-nasu'-budu Rabba-kumullazi khalaqakum walazina min-qablikum la-'allakum tataqun: "O mankind! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those who came before you that you may become righteous." (2.21)

Furthermore it is stated in the sura "Al-Nahl", or "The Bee":

Wa lillahi yasjudu ma fi-samawati wa ma fil-'arzi min daba tinwal-mala-'ikatu wa hum la yastakbirun: "To Allah does prostrate all that is in the heavens and on the earth, whether living creatures or the angels. For none are proud (before their Lord)." (16.49)

Thus even the highest angels are not arrogant; they bow down and serve their Lord, as does all Creation. It is the duty of everyone to worship and serve God. It is the only way to connect our consciousness to the divine consciousness and perfect our human life.

It is also explained in the sura "Al-Ra'd," or "Thunder" of the Holy Qur'an:

Wa lillahi yasjudu man fi-samawati wal-'arzi taw-'anwa kar hanwa zilaluhum-bilgu-duwi wal-'asal: "To Allah falls prostrate whatever beings there are in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, as do their shadows in the morning and the evening hours." (13.15)

Here the words "willingly" and "unwillingly" are very important and have profound significance. It is said that we bow down before the Lord with our face down willingly; conversely, at the time of death, we are forced to lie before the Lord with our bodies lying flat on the ground. It is better to voluntarily bow down before God and be saved than forcibly fall flat at the time of the death in front of the Lord and rot in this material world.

Next, it is said in the Holy Qur'an:

Alam tara 'annallaha yasjudu lahu man fi-samawati wa man fil-'arzi washamsa wai-qamaru wan-nujumu wal-jihalu washajaru wadawabu wa kasirum-minanas: "Have you not seen that to Allah prostrate whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth, - the sun, the moon, the stars, the hills, the trees, the animals, and a great number among mankind?" (22.18)

Wa ma khalaqtul jinna wal-'insa 'illa liya'-budun: "I (Allah) have created the jinns and men, that they only may worship Me." (51.56)

Sabaha lillahi ma fi-samawati wal-'arz / wa huwal 'Azizul Hakim: "All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah. For He is the Mighty, the Wise." (57.1)

It is explained in the sura "Al-Imran", or "The Family of 'Imran":

Lahu 'aslama man fi-samawati wal-'arzi taw-'anwa karhanwa 'ilayhi yurja-'un: "To Him submits whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and unto Him they will be returned." (3.90)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"All Nature adores Allah, and Islam asks for nothing peculiar or sectarian; it but asks that we follow our nature and make our will conformable to Allah's Will as seen in Nature, history and revelation. Its message is universal." (9, p. 166)

Furthermore, in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow" it is stated:

Ballahu ma fi-samawati wal-'arz / kullul-lahu qanitun: "To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on the earth. Everything renders worship to Him." (2.116)

Allah is the only worshipable object. Everyone worships Him directly or indirectly, willingly or unwillingly. This cosmic manifestation is meant for worshipping Him. Those who worship Him with love and devotion attain peace and prosperity, otherwise life becomes full of miseries and distress.

## **PART FOUR**

### **Conclusion**

Although the Muslim scholar wanted to discuss with Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu the impersonal nature of the Lord on the basis of the Qur'an, during their discussion Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu explained to him, by quoting the same Qur'an, that Allah has an impersonal as well as a personal nature. He then presented the different attributes of Allah. Further, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Allah is the cause of all causes. By engaging in His devotional service, the living entity is relieved from material existence. No conditioned soul can get out of material bondage without serving the Supreme Lord. Love of the Supreme Lord is the ultimate goal of life. The happiness of liberation, whereby one merges into the Lord's existence, cannot even be compared to a fragment of the transcendental bliss obtained by service unto the Lord. In the Qur'an there are descriptions of fruitive activity, speculative knowledge, mystic power and union with the Supreme, but ultimately everything is refuted and the Lord's personal feature and His devotional service is established. Some scholars of the Qur'an are not very advanced in knowledge. Although there are many methods prescribed, they do not know that the ultimate conclusion should be considered the most powerful." (49, Madhya-lila, 18.193-197)

## **CHAPTER NINETEEN**

Allah is the cause



Innallaha ya'-ti bi shamsi minal mashriqi:  
"Behold! Allah causes the sun to rise in the East."  
(The Qur'an 2.258)

"Allah is the cause of all causes", Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said.  
(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.193)

Here Mahaprabhu explains that Allah is the original cause of all causes. Each effect has its cause, which in turn has its own cause. In this way, if we were to move backwards from cause to cause, we will naturally arrive at the supreme cause. This supreme cause is Allah. Everything originates from Him. But He Himself is beginningless. Allah has no beginning. Therefore He has no cause. He Himself is the primeval cause of all causes.

Thus it is stated in the Holy Qur'an:

Allazi ja-'aia lakumul-'arza fira-shan-wasama bina / wa 'anzala minas-sama-'i ma-anfa-'akh-raja bihi mina samarati rizgal-lakum: "Who has made the earth a resting place for you and the sky a canopy, and cause water to pour from the sky, thereby producing fruits as food for you." (2.22)

Iz qala 'Ibrahimu Rabbi-yal-lazi yuhyi wa yumitu. . . . Innallaha ya'-ti bi shamsi minal mashriqi: "Abraham said: My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death. . . . Behold! Allah causes the sun to rise in the East." (2.258)

Tulijul-layla fi-nahari wa tulijun-nahara fi-layl / wa tukhrijul-haya minal-mayiti wa tukhrijul-mayita minal-hayi wa tarzuqu mantasha-'u bi-gayri hisab: "You (Allah) cause the night to pass into the day and You cause the day to pass into the night. And You bring forth the living from the dead, and You bring forth the dead from the living. And You give sustenance to whom You choose, without measure." (3.27)

From all these quotations we can easily understand that Allah is the supreme cause of all causes. But we can see today mans blunt senses, his lack of divine knowledge and spiritual understanding leads him to falsely think he is the cause of all things around him. Man thinks, "I have created my son". But who is the cause of the parents that cause the son? Allah is the primal cause, the cause of everything. Man thinks, "I have created this nice house with my own energy." But who is the cause of the five fundamental elements - earth, water, fire, air, ether - which form the ingredients for every material construction, whether it be a single brick for your house, a metal for your spaceships or the complex bodily form for your soul? Allah is the original cause of the material manifestation and this material manifestation is not independent from Him. He has no cause, for He is the eternal cause of all causes, transcendental to this material manifestation. He is the ultimate dative, causative and accommodating cause of all causes. When any human can produces anything starting with zero then we can say he is the cause. The scientist today even with the fundamental ingredients can not produce even a single blade of grass what to speak of human life. Allah is the primeval cause of all causes of the creation, sustenance and destruction of the manifested universes. He is independent because there

is no other cause beyond Him. The Lord is ultimately the cause of all animation in the material world. He is the original cause. Effects of the original cause become the causes of other effects and thus everything, either permanent or temporary, is working as cause and effect. Because the Lord is the primeval cause of all persons and energies, He is called the cause of all causes. He is the principle primeval cause of all causes and effects. There is no cause for all phenomenal activities except Him, the Supreme Lord. Although, He is without a cause.

## CHAPTER TWENTY

Allah is the only object of

devotional service.

Alla ta'budu 'illal-lah:  
"Serve none but Allah."  
(The Qur'an 11.2)

"By engaging in His devotional service, the living entity is relieved from material existence", Mahaprabhu added.  
(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.193)

Now Mahaprabhu points out that only by engaging in devotional service to the Supreme Lord can one free himself from the miserable material life. In forgetfulness of God one pursues illusory material happiness which bring him nothing but miseries. Actually one cannot achieve happiness without devotional service to the Lord. It awards one real happiness and ultimate perfection of human life. Therefore one who has sufficient intelligence must engage himself in devotional service unto Allah to get freed from the pangs of material life.

So in the Holy Qur'an there are descriptions of different devotional processes: Wa 'iza sa-'alaka 'ibadi 'ani fa-'inni qarib / 'ujibu da'-watad-da-'i 'iza da-'ani fal-yastajibu li walyu'-minu bi la-'allahum yar-shudu: "When My servants question you concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them). I respond to the prayer of every suppliant when he calls on Me. So let them hear My call and let them trust in Me, in order that they may be led aright."  
(2.186)

Fasabih bismi Rabbikal 'Azim: "So chant the name of your Tremendous Lord." (69.52)

Alla-zina 'a-manu wa tatma-'innu qulu-buhum-bi-zik-rillah / 'ala bi-zik-rillahi tatma-'innul-qulub

Alla-zina 'amanu wa 'amilus-salihati tuba la-hum wa husnu ma-'ab:

"Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah. Indeed in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction!

For those who believe and do right, is joy and a beautiful place of (final) return." (13.28-29)

Wa 'innallaha Rabbi wa Rabbukum fa'-buduh / haza siratum-mustaqim: "Verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord. So serve Him. That is the right path." (19.36)

It is stated in the sura "Al-Baqarah", or "The Cow":

Ya-'ayu-han-nasu'-budu Rabba-kumullazi khalaqakum wallazina min-qablikum la-'allakum tataqun: "O mankind! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those who came before you that you may become righteous." (2.21)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes in this regard:

"Adoration is the act of the highest and humblest reverence and worship. When you get into that relationship with Allah. Who is your Creator and Guardian, your faith produces works of righteousness. It is a chance given you; will you take it? If you do, your whole nature will be transformed." (9, p. 11)

Furthermore the Holy Qur'an said:

Wasta-'inu bi-sabri wa-salah / wa iinnaha lakabiraturun 'illa 'alal-khashi-'in: "Seek help in patience and prayers. Truly, it is hard except for those who are humble." (2.45)

Wa 'ati-'ullaha wa-rasula la-'allakum turhamun: "Obey Allah and the messenger, that you may obtain mercy." (3.132)

Wa man-yata-wal-al-laha wa rasulahu wallazina 'amanu fa-'inna hiz-ballahi humul-galibun: "Those who take Allah, His messenger, and the believers for friends, - it is the party of Allah that must certainly triumph." (5.56)

Inne ddina 'inda llahi lislam: "The Religion before Allah is the surrender (to His will and guidance)." (3.19)

One who engages in unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Lord transcends the material nature and is immediately elevated to the spiritual platform. Pure devotional service consists of nine different activities:

1. Hearing the holy name, qualities and glories of the Lord;
2. Chanting the holy name and glories of the Lord;
3. Remembering the Lord;
4. Serving the Lord;

5. Worshipping the Lord;
6. Praying to the Lord;
7. Obeying the orders of the Lord;
8. Maintaining friendship with the Lord;
9. Surrendering everything unto Him.

The first and foremost of all such devotional engagements is hearing about the Lord. This is a very powerful transcendental method for purifying the mind of all misgivings. After the devotee engages in the processes of hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshipping, praying, obeying and becomes fixed in these processes, he can later become a devotee capable of rendering spontaneous devotional service, namely maintaining friendship and surrendering everything to the Lord. One can engage in all nine devotional processes, or eight, or seven, or at least one and that will surely make one perfect.

In the Holy Qur'an we can find descriptions about all nine processes of devotional service:

### **1. H e a r i n g**

Wa 'iza sa-'alaka 'ibadi 'ani fa-'inni qarib / 'ujibu da'-watad-da-'i 'iza da-'ani fal-yastajibu li walyu'-minu bi la-'allahum yar-shudu: "When My servants question you concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them). I respond to the prayer of every suppliant when he calls on Me. So let them hear My call and let them trust in Me, in order that they may be led aright." (2.186)

Wa 'iza quri-'al-Qur'anu fas-tami-'u lahu wa 'ansitu la-'allakum turhamun: "When the Qur'an is recited, listen to it with attention, that you may obtain mercy." (7.204)

### **2. C h a n t i n g**

Fasabih bismi Rabbikal 'Azim: "So chant the name of your Tremendous Lord." (69.52)

Wa lil-lahil-'asma-'ul-husna fad-'uhu biha: "The most beautiful names belong to Allah. Invoke Him by them." (7.180)

"(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to Allah), . . . those who praise Him." (9.112)

Qulid-'ullaha 'awid-'ur-Rahman / 'ayama tad-'u fala-hul 'asma-'ul-husna: "Say: Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman (Beneficent), by whatever name you call upon Him (it is well). For to Him belong the most beautiful names." (17.110)

Wa sabi-hu lay-lan-tawila: "So glorify Him through the livelong night." (76.26)

Sabihisma Rabbikal 'Ala: "Chant the name of your Lord, the Most High." (87.1)

Wa sabihuhu bukratan wa 'asila: "And glorify Him morning and evening." (33.42)

### **3. R e m e m b e r i n g**

Alla-zina 'amanu wa tatma-'innu qulu-buhum-bi-zik-rillah / 'ala bi-zik-rillahi tatma-'innul-qulub: "Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah. Indeed in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction!

(13.28)

Faz-kuruni 'az-kurmun washkuru li wa la takfurun: "Therefore remember Me, I will remember you. Give thanks to Me and reject not Me." (2.152)

Fa-'iza qa-'zaytun manasika kum faz-kurullaha kazikrikum 'aba-'akum 'aw 'ashada zikra: "When you accomplished your rites, then remember Allah as you remember your fathers or with a more lively remembrance." (2.200)

After the Pilgrimage, in Pagan times, the pilgrims used to gather in assemblies in which the praises of ancestors were sung. It was required from pilgrims to stay on two or three days after the Day of Sacrifice, but they must use them in prayer and praise to Allah.

Ya-'ayuhallazina 'amanuz-kurullaha zikran-kasira: "O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance." (33.41)

Waz-kurisma Rabbika bukratan-wa 'asila: "Remember the name of your Lord morning and evening." (76.25)

Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Three methods of Prayer and Devotion are mentioned: 1) to remember and celebrate the holy name of Allah always; 2) to spend a part of the night in humble prostration; and 3) to glorify Him in the long hours of a weary night of waiting and watching. So the tyro, who celebrates the holy name of Allah, hopes some day to see the Face of Allah and be blessed with the privilege of proximity to His Person." (9, p. 1868)

Wazkur Rabbaka fi nafsika tazaru-'an-wa khifa-tan-wa dunal-jahri minal-qawli bil-guduwi wal-'asali wa la takum-minal-gafilin: "Do you (O Muhammad) bring your Lord to remembrance in your (very) soul with humility? And remember without loudness in words, in the mornings and evenings. And be you not of those who are neglectful." (7.205)

### **4. S e r v i n g**

At-ta -'ibunal-'abidunal-hami-dunas: "(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to Allah), those who serve Him." (9.112)

Allah ta'budu 'illal-lah: "Serve none but Allah." (11.2)

Shu'ayba qala ya-qawmi budul-laha: "He (Shu'aib) said: O my people! Serve Allah." (11.84)

Wa 'innallaha Rabbi wa Rabbukum fa'-buduh haza siratum-mustaqim: "Verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord. So serve Him. That is the right path." (19.36)

Innal-lazina 'inda Rabbika la yastak-biruna 'an 'iba-datihi wa yusabi-hunahu wa lahu yas-judun: "Those who are with your Lord are not too proud to do Him service, but they praise Him and adore Him." (7.206)

## **5. Worshipping**

Al-hamdu lillahi rabbi l'alam.

...

Iyyaka nabudu waiyaka nastain:

"Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

...

You do we worship, and You we ask for help." (1.1 ... 4)

On realizing Allah's love and care, His grace and mercy, His power and justice, we bow before Him in the act of worship, and see both our shortcomings and His all-sufficient power. The emphatic style in which the above verse has been constructed clearly shows that not only do we reach the position of worshipping Allah and enlisting His help, but we worship and seek aid from Him alone. Thus there is none worthier of our devotion than Allah Who alone is capable of lending us help.

Fa 'budhu wa tawakkel 'alayin: "So worship Him and put your trust in Him." (11.123)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Worship implies many things: e. g., 1) trying to understand His nature and His Will; 2) realizing His goodness and glory, and His working in us; as a means to this end; 3) keeping Him in constant remembrance and celebrating His praise, to whom all praise is due; and 4) completely identifying our will with His, which means obedience to His Law, and service to Him and His creatures in all sincerity." (9, p. 620)

Ya-'ayu-han-nasu'-budu Rabba: "O mankind! Worship your Lord." (2.21)

Wa 'aqimu-salata wa 'atu-zakata warka-'u ma-'ar-raki-'in: "Establish worship, give zakat and bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship)." (2.43)

Zalikumul-lahu Rabbukum . . . fa'-buduh: "Such is Allah, your Lord! . . . So worship Him." (6.103)

"(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to Allah), . . . those who fast, those who bow down, those who fall prostrate (in worship)." (9.112)

Qulillaha 'a-budu mukh-lisal-lahu diini: "Say: It is Allah I worship, with my sincere (and exclusive) devotion." (39.14)

Wa minal-lay-li fas-jud lahu: "And worship Him (a portion) of the night." (76.26)

Wa aqimi ssalata tarafayi nnahari wa zulafam min ellayil: "Establish worship at the two ends of the day and in some watches of the night." (11.114)

## **6. P r a y i n g**

Wasta-'inu bi-sabri wa salah: "Seek help in patience and prayer." (2.45)

Fed 'uhu muhlisina lahu ddiin / alhamdu lillahi rabbi l'alam: "So pray unto Him, giving Him sincere devotion. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds!" (40.65)

Ya ayyuha lladina amanu sta'inu bissabri wa ssala / inna llaha ma'a ssabirin: "O you who believe! Seek help in steadfastness and prayer. For Allah is with those who steadfast." (2.153)

Ud-'u Rabbakum tazaru-'an wa khufyah: "Call on your Lord with humility and in private." (7.55)

Wa la tajhar bi-salatika wa la tukhafit biha wabtagi bayna zalika sabila: "Neither speak the prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between." (17.110)

## **7. O b e y i n g**

Wataqullaha wa lamu 'annallaha ma 'al-mutaqin: "Observe your duty to Allah and know that Allah is with those who restrain themselves." (2.194)

Tabi-'a Hudaya fala khawfun 'alayhim wa la hum yahzanun: "Those who follow My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve." (2.38)

Wataqullaha la-'allakum tufihun: "Observe your duty to Allah, that you may prosper." (2.189)

Wa 'ati-'ullaha wa rasula la-'allakum turhamun: "Obey Allah and the messenger, that you may obtain mercy." (3.132)

Tilka hududullah / wa man yut 'illaha wa rasulahu yudkhilhu jannatin-tajri: "There are the limits (imposed by) Allah. Those who obey Allah and His messenger, will be admitted to Gardens." (4.13)

"(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to Allah), . . . those who enjoin the right and who forbid the wrong and observe the limits set by Allah." (9.112)

Fas-bir li-hukmi Rabbika: "So submit patiently to your Lord's command." (76.24)

## **8. Maintaining - friendship**

Allahu waliy-yulazina 'amanu yukhrijuhum-mina-zulumati 'ilan-nur: "Allah is the Protecting Friend of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light." (2.257)

Innama waliyu-kumullahu wa rasuluhu walazina 'amanu-lazina yuqi-muna-salata wa yu'-tu-na-zakata wa hum raki-'un: "Your (real) friends are Allah, His messenger, and believers, - those who establish regular prayers and pay zakat and bow down humbly (in worship)." (5.55)

Wa man-yata-wal-al-laha wa rasulahu walazina 'amanu fa-'inna hiz-ballahi humul-galibun: "Those who take Allah and His messenger and the believers for friends, - it is the party of Allah that must certainly triumph." (5.56)

Lahum daru-salami 'inda Rabbihim wa huwa Waliyu-hum-bima kanu ya'-malun: "For them will be the abode of peace with their Lord. He will be their Friend because they practiced (righteousness)." (6.127)

Watakhazallahu Ibrahima khalila: "Allah (Himself) chose Abraham for a friend." (4.125)

Abraham is distinguished in Muslim theology with the title of "Friend of Allah". (9, p. 255)

## **9. Surrendering**

Inne ddina 'inda llahi lislam: "The Religion before Allah (is) the surrender (to His will and guidance)." (3.19)

Man 'aslama wajhahu lillahi wa huwa muhsinun falahu 'ajruhu 'inda Rabbih: "Whoever surrenders his whole self to Allah while doing good, - he will get his reward with his Lord." (2.112)

Id qala lahu rabbuhu aslim / qala aslemtu lirabbi l'alam.



Wa awsa biha ibrahimu bnih / wa ya'gubu ya baniyya inna llaha stafa lakumu ddina fala tamutunna illa wa entum muslimun:

"When his Lord said to him: 'Surrender!' He (Abraham) said: 'I have surrendered to the Lord of the worlds'.

Abraham enjoined the same upon his sons and so did Jacob (saying): 'O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion; therefore die not but as men who have surrendered (to Him).' (2.131-132)

By sincerely engaging ones self in these nine processes of devotional service everyone can be relieved from the miseries of material existence and attain God's abode.

## **CHAPTER TWENTY ONE**

Allah rescues souls

Anjay-nallazina yan-hawna 'anis-su-'i:

"We rescued those who forbade wrong."

(The Qur'an 7.165)

"No conditioned soul can get out of material bondage without serving the Supreme Lord", Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.194)

Here Mahaprabhu explains that the conditioned souls can get out of material entanglement only by devotional service to Allah. A soul who is eternal and spiritual, becomes dependent on his surroundings after coming to this material world. Therefore, the spirit souls residing in the material world are called conditioned, because they are under the sway of the stringent laws of material nature. When the conditioned souls give up their service to the Supreme Lord, they begin serving material objects. Because a soul by nature is a servant of God, when he forgets God and rejects His service he becomes a servant of matter since no one can be without service. Thus one becomes a servant of his senses, whimsical desires, family members etc. This gradually makes him a slave to material objects. To become free from such slavery one must reestablish his eternal occupational duty, namely devotional service to God. Only through devotional service to the Supreme Lord can one get freed from material bondage and unlimited suffering of mundane life.

This point is explained in the Holy Qur'an in the following way:

Ya-'ayuhallazina 'amanuz-kurullaha zikran-kasira.

Wasabihuhu bukratan wa 'asila.

Huwa lazi yusali 'alaykum wa mala-ikatuhu liyukhrijakum-mina zulumati'ila nur /  
wakana bil-mu'minina rahima

Tahiyatuhum yawma yalqawnahu salam / wa 'ada lahim 'ajran-karima:

"O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance;

Glorify Him early and late.

He it is Who sends blessings on you, as do His angels, that He may bring you forth from darkness unto light. He is Merciful to the believers.

Their salutation on the Day they meet Him will be: 'Peace!' And He has prepared for them a generous reward." (33.41-44)

Wasta-'inu bi-sabri wa salah / wa 'innaha lakabiratun 'illa 'alal-khashi-'in

'Allazina yazun-nuna 'anahum-mulaqu Rabbihim wa 'anahum 'ilayhi raji-'un:

"Seek help in patience and prayer. It is indeed hard, except to those who are humble,

Who know that they will have to meet their Lord, and that to Him they are returning."  
(2.45-46)

Wallazina 'amanu wa 'amilus-salihati 'ula-'ika 'as-habul-jannah / hum fiha khalidun:

"Those who believe and do good works, they are companions of the Garden. They will abide therein." (2.82)

Qul 'amara Rabbi bilqist / wa 'aqimu wuju-hakum 'inda kulli masjidin-wad'uhu mukhlisina la-hudin / kama bada-'akum ta-'udun: "Say: My Lord has commanded justice, and that you set your whole selves (to Him) at every time and place of worship and call upon Him, making your devotion to Him sincere. Such as He created you in the beginning, so shall you return (to Him)." (7.29)

Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"Our devotion should be sincere, not as in other men's sight, but by presenting our whole selves, heart and soul, to Allah. Even so, it may not be enough; for the sight of our heart and soul may be faulty. We should call upon Allah to give us the light, by which our sincerity may commend itself to Him as true sincerity "as in His sight". Our sincerity should be real sincerity, as in His sight for when we return to Him, we shall be stripped of all pretense, even such self-deception as may satisfy us in this life." (9, p. 404)

Falama nasu ma zukiru bihi 'anjay-nalazina yan-hawna 'anis-su-'i: "When they disregarded the warnings that had been given them, We rescued those who forbade wrong." (7.165)

Wa haza siratu Rabbika mustaqima / qad fasalnā 'ayati li-qaw-minyazak-karun

Lahum darus-salami 'inda Rabbihim wa huwa waliyu-hum-bima kanu ya'-malun:

"This is the way of your Lord, leading straight. We have detailed Our revelations for those who take heed.

For them will be the abode of peace with their Lord. He will be their Friend because they practiced (righteousness)." (6.126-127)

From these verses of the Holy Qur'an we can understand that only by serving the Supreme Lord and by following His instructions given in the revealed scriptures can we get out of material bondage.

## **CHAPTER TWENTY TWO**

Love of

Allah is the ultimate goal

Wallazina 'amanu 'ashadu hubal-lillah:

"Those who believe are overflowing in their love for Allah."  
(The Qur'an 2.165)

"Love of the Supreme Lord is the ultimate goal of life", Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.194)

Here Mahaprabhu points out that love of God is the ultimate goal of human life. When a spirit soul forgets this supreme goal of life he begins developing love for material objects, because no one can be without loving relationships. Our constitutional position is to love God. But when we neglect God we begin to develop so-called love for temporary material objects. Such an illusory love and affection are unnatural for us. Hence our dissatisfaction and frustration. We invent different goals of life to achieve satisfaction; but what we are really looking for, what is in the innermost recesses of our heart is the sublime spiritual desire to love God and thereby derive the greatest and most fulfilling satisfaction. Material goals achieved are bound to give us only incomplete and short-lived satisfaction which in turn is transformed into frustration; conversely, spiritual satisfaction is complete and endless. Thus, the only goal, the achievement of which can award us complete satisfaction and happiness, is love of God. This is made possible only through unmotivated and uninterrupted devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

So in the Holy Qur'an we find the following ayats:

Qul 'in-kuntum tuhibu-nallaha fatabi-'uni yuhbib-kumullahu wa yagfir lakum zunubakum / wallahu Gafurur-Rahim: "Say (O Muhammad): If you do love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. For Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (3.31)

Innalazina 'amanu wa 'amilus-salihati sayaj-'alu lahumur-Rahmanu wuda: "On those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, the Beneficent will bestow love." (19.96)

Wa minanasi manyatakhizu min-dunillahi 'andadan-yuhibunahum ka-hubillah / wallazina 'amanu 'ashadu hubal-lillah: "Yet there are men who take (for worship) others besides Allah, as equal (with Allah). They love them as they should love Allah. But those who believe are overflowing in their love for Allah." (2.165)

There is a very significant verse in the sura "Al-Ma'ida", or "The Table Spread":

Ya-'ayu-halazina 'amanu man-yar-tada min-kum 'an-dinihi fa-sawfa ya'-tillahu bi-qawmin-yu-hibbu-hum wa yuhib-bunahuu 'azillatin 'alal-mu'minina 'a-'izzatin 'alal-Kafirina yujaa-hiduuna fii Sabilil-laahi wa laa yakhaa-fuuna law-mata laaa'im / Zaalika Fazlul-laahi yu'-tiihi many-yashaaa' / Wallaahu Waasi-'un 'Alim: "O you who believe! If any from among you turn back from his faith, soon Allah will bring a people whom He will love as they will love Him, - humble toward believers, mighty toward unbelievers, striving in the way of Allah, and never afraid of the blame of any blamer. That is the grace of Allah, which He will bestow on whom He pleases. Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing." (5.54)

Thus here is a warning to the Muslim community that they should not become so self-satisfied or arrogant as to depart from the spirit of God's teachings. If they do, the loss will be theirs. God's bounty is not confined to one group or section of humanity. God can, as and when he pleases, bring people who are staunch followers of the true spirit of Eternal Religion. That true spirit is defined in two ways:

- 1) They love God and God loves them;
- 2) Amongst them, their attitude will be one of humility.

They will be uncompromising towards unbelievers; they will always strive and fight for truth and right, they will know no fear.

Actually in this verse there is a great prediction that soon God will bring people whom He will love and vise versa. These people will follow the principles of Eternal Religion which means Love of God. By cultivating this love, a soul is purified from all material desires and attachments, becomes able to transcend the limits of material existence and enter into the realm of spiritual existence which is the highest perfection of life.

It is stated in the sura "An-Najm", or "The Star":

Wa 'anna 'ila Rabbikal-muntaha: "That your Lord, He is the final goal." (53.42)

Real love is love to God and it is the ultimate goal of life. In the Holy Qur'an the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) explained that instead of so-called love for the world, people should cultivate real love for Allah. It is the goal of human life. All loving relationships in the material world are just perverted reflections of real love of God. Because we have forgotten our loving relationships with God, we try to develop the so-called love for the different objects of this material world. Thus, we try to be happy, but there is always failure and anxiety, for real eternal unconditional love and happiness exists only in the spiritual world. Just like water does not exist in the desert, similarly love and happiness do not exist in the material world. This material love we are struggling to enjoy in this material world is compared to trying to enjoy and satisfy ourselves with a mirrored reflection of a delicious meal but we are frustrated at every attempt. Real love for God is laying dormant within our hearts. If we want to awaken this love we need to reestablish our forgotten relationship with the Supreme. Attached to love of wife, child, home, money, country and friend we attain only superficial love but when we engage ourselves in the devotional service to the Supreme Lord, we attain the ocean of pleasure, the reservoir of love, the origin of love. That is why we should engage ourselves in the devotional service to the Supreme Lord. This is the only way to awaken our dormant love of God and go back to the spiritual world. It is the ultimate goal of human life.

## **CHAPTER TWENTY THREE**

Allah awards bliss

Qad - aflaha 'man tazakka:

"He indeed has attained bliss who has purified himself."

(The Qur'an 87.14)

"The happiness of liberation, whereby one merges into the Lord's existence, cannot even be compared to a fragment of the transcendental bliss obtained by service unto the Lord", Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.195)

Here Mahaprabhu explains how mediocre the happiness derived from merging into the existence of the Lord's existence by stating that it cannot be compared to even a "fragment" of the transcendental bliss obtained by devotional service to God. He reiterates that spiritual bliss obtained by devotional service to the Supreme Lord is the highest form of happiness in all creation. Thus other types of spiritual advancement pale into insignificance before such incomparably sublime spiritual bliss.

Thus in the sura "Al-Ma'ida", or "The Table Spread" of the Holy Qur'an it is written:

Qa-lallahu haza yawmu yanfa-'us-saadiqina sidquhum / lahum jannatun-tajri min-tahtihl-'anharu kha-lidina fiha 'abada / razi-yallahu 'anhum wa razu 'anh / zalikal-fauzul-

'azim: "Allah will say: This is a day on which the truthful will profit from their truthfulness. For them are Gardens, with rivers flowing beneath, which is their eternal Home. Allah takes pleasure in them and they in Him. That is the great triumph." (5.119)

In this verse the word "faux" is very significant. Faux means triumph, felicity, happiness, achievement, salvation, and the attainment or fulfillment of desires. How beautiful salvation or the end of earthly life is! How elevating and wonderful it would be if only we could win Allah's good will and thereby reach the stage at which His good pleasure will be our only aim!

Another important statement is Razi-yallahu 'anhum wa razu 'anh: "Allah takes pleasure in them and they in Him". Actually our pleasure is dependent on Allah's pleasure. Only if Allah is pleased with our devotional service can we feel real happiness. This happiness is transcendental and has nothing to do with mundane happiness achieved through material senses. No pleasure can be compared with the bliss obtained by devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Furthermore, in the sura "At-Tauba", or "Repentance," the Holy Qur'an says:

Was-sabi-qunal 'awa-luna minal-muhajirina wal-'ansari wallazinataba-'uhum-bi-'ihsanir-razi-yallahu 'anhum wa razu 'anhu wa 'adda lahum jannatin-tajri tahtahal-'anharu khalidina fiha 'abada / za-likal-fawzul-'azim: "The vanguard (of Islam) - the first of the Muhajirs (Emigrants) and the Ansar (Helpers), and those who followed them in good deeds, - Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him. For them has He prepared Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein for ever. That is the supreme triumph." (9.100)

Next it states in the sura "Al-Baiyina", or "The Clear Evidence":

Innallazina 'amanu wa 'amilus-salihati 'ula-'ika hum khayrul-bariyah.

Jaza 'uhum 'inda Rabbihim jannatu 'adnin-tajri min-tahtihal-'anharu khalidina fiha 'abada / raziyal-lahu 'anhum wa razu 'anh / zalika liman khashiya Rabbah:

"Those who believe and do righteous deeds, - they are the best of created beings.

Their reward is with their Lord: Gardens of Eden beneath which rivers flow, they will dwell therein for ever. Allah has pleasure in them and they have pleasure in Him. This is for him who fear his Lord." (98.7-8)

Ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali comments:

"The Good Pleasure of Allah is the final Bliss of Salvation. The good pleasure is mutual; the truly saved is the he whose will has become completely identified with Allah's universal will." (9, p. 1989)

It is stated in the sura "Al-A'la", or "The Most High":

Qad - aflaha 'man tazakka

Wa - dhakarasma rabbihi fasalla:

"He indeed has attained bliss who has purified himself,

And who remembers the name of his Lord, and prays."

(87.14-15)

Some people try to obtain happiness through the liberation from material sufferings, some strive for merging into the Lord's existence, His spiritual light like Sufis. But in the Holy Qur'an, it is explained that the bliss and pleasure obtained by service unto the Lord are eternal and of the highest. By taking shelter of the Supreme Lord, devotional service unto Him and love for God, devoted souls finally obtain the eternal abode of the Lord and derive supreme transcendental pleasure by associating with God.

## **CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR**

Devotional service to

Allah is the ultimate perfection

Fa'-budni wa 'aqimis-salata li-zikri:

"So serve Me and establish worship for My remembrance."

(The Qur'an 20.14)

"In the Qur'an there are descriptions of fruitive activity, speculative knowledge, mystic power and union with the Supreme, but ultimately everything is refuted when the Lord's personal feature and His devotional service is established", Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu concluded.

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.196)

This statement of Mahaprabhu's is the epitome and conclusion of what he has hitherto said. Although the Holy Qur'an describes fruitive activity, speculative knowledge; mystic power and union with the Supreme Lord, it finally stresses Allah's personal features and devotional service to Him. Among all the processes of self-realization, pure devotional service to the Supreme is the highest perfection of life.

### **24.1. Fruitive - activity**

Generally, in this material world people are engaged in fruitive activity, which is earning money for one's own sense gratification. Among such people there are two categories:

- 1) Those who remember Allah and sacrifice part of their money for Allah's pleasure.
- 2) Those who neglect Allah and use all their money for their own pleasure.

Those who belong to the first category are pious and they use some fruits of their activity in Allah's service. If such people are righteous and strictly follow the rules and regulations of Islam, then they will be promoted to the heavens, where they will be able to enjoy the heavenly happiness. The heavens is the destination of those who are righteously engaged in fruitive activity.

Thus we can find the following ayats in the Holy Qur'an:

Minkum-man-yuridud-dunya wa minkum-man-yuridul-'akhirah: "Some of you desired the world and some of you desired the Hereafter." (3.152)

Zuyina linasi hubush-shahawati minan-nisa-'i wal-banina wal-qanatiril-muqan-tarati minazahabi wal-fizzati wal-khay-lil-musawamati wal-'an-'ami wal-hars / zalika mata-'ul-hayatid-dunya / wallahu 'indahu husnil-ma'ab

Qul 'a-'unabi-'ukum-bi-khayrim-min-zalikum / lil-lazinat-taqaw 'inda Rabbihim jannatun-tajri min-tahtihal-'anharu khalidina fiha wa 'azwajum-mutah-haratunw-wa rizwanum-minallah / wallahu basirum-bil-'ibad:

"Fair in the eyes of men is love of the joys (that come) from women and offspring, stored-up heaps of gold and silver, horses branded (with their mark), cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life. But with Allah is a more excellent abode.

Say: Shall I inform you of things better than those? For the righteous are Gardens in nearness to their Lord with rivers flowing beneath and pure companions, and contentment from Allah. For Allah is the Seer of His servants." (3.14-15)

Wa bashi-rillazina 'amanu wa 'amilus-sali-hati 'anna lahum jannatin-tajri min-tahtihal-'anhar: "Give glad tidings (O Muhammad) to those who believe and do good works, that theirs are Gardens beneath which rivers flow." (2.25)

Lakinillazi-nata-qaw Rabbahum lahum jannatun tajri min tahtihal-'anharu khalidina fiha: "For those who fear their Lord, are Gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will dwell." (3.198)

Tilka hududul-lah / wa man-yuti-'il-laha wa rasulahu yudkhil-hu jannatin-tajri min-tahtihal-'anharu khalidina fiha: "These are limits set by Allah. Those who obey Allah and His



messenger will be admitted to Gardens with rivers flowing beneath, to abide therein." (4.13)

Wa man-ya-mal minas- salihati min-zakarin 'aw 'unsa wa huwa mu'minun fa-'ula-'ika yadkhu-lunal-jannata: "Those who does good works, whether of male or female, and he (or she) is a believer, they will enter paradise." (4.124)

Some people are trying to enjoy material life by performing pious activities, some strive to attain the heavens. But the Holy Qur'an refutes these by explaining to us that, of all, Allah's abode is the most desirable and supremely pleasurable. Those who are following the path of religion can be divided into three groups, namely

- 1) the followers of scriptural rules and regulations who are enjoying material prosperity;
- 2) those who are trying to find ultimate liberation from material existence and
- 3) those who are devotees of God.

Those who are following the rules and regulations of the scriptures for material happiness may be further divided into two classes:

- 1) those who work for fruitive results and
- 2) those who desire no fruit for sense gratification.

Those who are after fruitive results for sense gratification may be elevated to a higher standard of life - even to the heavenly planets - but still, because they are not free from material existence, they are not following the truly auspicious path. The only auspicious activities are those which lead one to liberation. Any activity which is not aimed at ultimate self-realization or liberation from the material bodily concept of life is not at all auspicious. Activity in Allah consciousness is the only auspicious activity, and anyone who voluntarily accepts all bodily discomforts for the sake of making progress on the path of Allah consciousness can be called a perfect transcendentalist under severe austerity. One should not engage in the different processes of fruitive activity or cultivate knowledge by the mental speculative process. One who is devoted to Allah can attain all the benefits derived from other religious processes. That is the specific benediction of devotional service to God. Therefore any activity other than transcendental loving service to the Lord is more or less a rebellious action against the supreme will. All fruitive activity, empirical philosophy and mysticism are more or less against the sense of subordination to the Lord, and the living entity engaged in such rebellious activity is more or less condemned by the Lord. Material existence consists of pious and impious activities. As long as one is engaged in any kind of activity other than devotional service, it will result in the happiness and distress of this material world. No one can transcend the illusory energy by fruitive activity, speculative philosophy or mysticism. The only means for transcending illusory energy is devotional service. The minds of those who are addicted to fruitive activity are always filled with unclean desires. Fruitive activities are

symptomatic of our polluted desire to dominate material nature. At the present moment almost everyone is engaged in some kind of fruitive activity. Those who strongly desire material gains by working are called fruitive workers. When we speak of fruitive activity, we refer to activities carried out for the purpose of sense gratification. That is, we are earning money in order to gratify our senses. If you go to heaven you will attain a better standard of life. A better standard of eating, sleeping, mating and defending. That is all. So this is called fruitive activity.

## 24.2. Speculative knowledge

Some people are trying to understand God through speculative knowledge. By the strength of their mind and intelligence, they are trying to approach God and thereby achieve perfection. They are using the speculative power of their mind to acquire knowledge of God. But the Holy Qur'an says that understanding God through such process is impossible. One must understand God by careful study of the scriptures and devotional service to the Supreme Lord. Only by the causeless mercy of Allah, will the hidden treasure of Al-Qur'an be revealed to the sincere seeker.

So in the sura "Al-An'am", or "Cattle" of the Holy Qur'an also it is explained:

Qul-la 'aquulu lakum 'indi khaza-'inul-lahi wa la 'a-lamul-gayba wa laaa 'aquulu lakum 'innii malak. In 'attabi-'u 'illaa maa yuuhaaa 'ilayy: "Say (O Muhammad to the unbelievers): 'I tell not to you that I possess the treasures of Allah, nor that I have knowledge of the Unseen. Nor do I tell you I am an angel. I but follow what is revealed to me.'" (6.50)

Literary, it might mean that the Prophets are not like vulgar soothsayers, who pretend to reveal hidden treasures, or peer into future, or claim to be something of a different nature from men. But the meaning is wider: they deal out Allah's great treasures of truth, but the treasures are not theirs, but Allah's; they have greater insight into the higher things, but that insight is not due to their own wisdom, but to Allah's inspiration; they are of the same flesh and blood with us, and the sublimity of their words and teachings arises through Allah's grace to them and to those who hear them.

Furthermore, the Holy Qur'an says:

Qul 'innama 'il-muha 'inda Rabbi / la yu-jalliha li-waq-ti-ha 'illahu . . . Innama 'il-muha 'indal-lahi wa lakina 'aksaran-nasi la ya-la-mun: "Say: 'The knowledge thereof is with my Lord only. He alone will manifest it at its proper time. ... The knowledge thereof is with Allah only, but most of mankind know not.'" (7.187)

Wa law kuntu 'a-lamul-gayba lastak-sartu minal-khayri wa ma masani-yas-su / 'in 'ana 'illa nazirunw-wa bashirul-li-qawminy-yu-minun: "If I had knowledge of the Unseen, I should have abundance of wealth and adversity would not touch me. I am but a warner and a bearer of good tidings to those who believe." (7.188)

Ha-'antum ha-'ula-'i hajajtum fima lakum-bihi 'ilmun-falima tuhajuna fima laysa lakum-bihi 'ilm? Wallahu ya-lamu wa 'antum la ta-lamun: "Behold! You are those who argue about that whereof you have some knowledge. But why argue you concerning that whereof you have no knowledge? Allah knows. You know not." (3.66)

Wa lakin-kunu Rabba-niyina bima kuntum tu-'allimunal-kitaba wa bima kuntum tadrusun: "Be you faithful servants of the Lord by virtue of your constant teaching of the scripture and of your constant study thereof." (3.79)

From these ayats, it is obvious that the method of acquiring perfection through speculative knowledge is refuted. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) explained that although he is the Prophet of God, he does not have complete knowledge. Finally, becoming the faithful servant of the Lord by virtue of constant study of the scripture is recommended. The members of modern civilization manufacture so many defective religious principles through speculative concoctions. This is not religion. They do not know what is religion and what is irreligion. Real religion is not something that can be manufactured. It is knowledge direct from God, which exists eternally. The real purpose of knowledge is to know Allah. One who knows Allah is liberated. No one, therefore, can understand God by speculative knowledge. Indeed, by speculation one will be bewildered. Speculative knowledge cannot give us reality as it is, but will always be imperfect. Simply due to the fact that our senses for gathering knowledge are imperfect. So-called scientists try to prove that there is no God and that everything is happening because of the laws of nature, but this is imperfect knowledge because nothing can work unless it's directed by Allah. There are so many nonsensical literatures, stories and books of speculative philosophy. Materialistic persons are very interested in reading such literature. But when they are presented with genuine books of knowledge like the Holy Qur'an, they are not interested. These persons are condemned by the supreme order of Allah. One has to acquire pure knowledge from the authorized scriptures. So-called speculative arguments about the Absolute Truth are therefore useless.

However, on the path of sincere speculative knowledge, one can become free from sinful life by understanding things as they are. Therefore, the acquirement of speculative knowledge is also considered a method of atonement, but a very slow method. One is gradually purified if one cultivates knowledge, even through mental speculation, and strictly follows the regulative principles enjoined in the scriptures. Therefore, the platform of speculative knowledge, is better than the platform of fruitive action. There is every chance of falling from the platform of fruitive activity to hellish conditions, but on the platform of speculative knowledge one is saved from hellish life, although one is still not completely free from material infection. The difficulty is that on the platform of speculative knowledge one thinks that he has been liberated and has become god. This is another phase of ignorance. Actually the highest knowledge consists of understanding Allah. Unintelligent men who do not understand Allah are grossly puffed up, thinking that they are liberated or have themselves become Allah. This is ignorance. Real knowledge and real liberation is to surrender unto Allah and engage in devotional service. Simply by the speculative process one cannot be freed from material bondage, for the cause of bondage still exists. One has to remove the cause, and then the effect will be

removed. The Lord is eternally the symbol of full and perfect knowledge. This is His uniqueness: perpetual freedom from all material contaminations. This distinguishes the Lord from the common living entities. By unnecessary dry speculative arguments, the whole subject matter becomes distorted, and thus the Lord moves still further away from our understanding. The dry speculators, however, because of their following the principles of austerity and penance, can have knowledge of the impersonal features of the Lord to some extent, but there is no chance of their understanding Him perfectly because only the completely sinless persons can accept pure devotional service to the Lord. When advancement of knowledge is applied in the service of the Lord, the whole process becomes absolute. There is no use presenting dry speculative theories for sense gratification. Philosophy and science should be engaged to establish the glory of the Lord. Advanced people are eager to understand the Absolute Truth through the medium of science, and therefore a great scientist should endeavor to prove the existence of the Lord on a scientific basis. Similarly, philosophical speculations should be utilized to establish the Supreme Truth as sentient and all-powerful. In this way, all other branches of knowledge should always be engaged in the service of the Lord. All "knowledge" not engaged in the service of the Lord is but nescience. Real utilization of advanced knowledge is to establish the glories of the Lord, and this is real service to Allah and humanity. Scientific knowledge engaged in the service of the Lord and all similar activities are all factually glorification of the Lord.

### 24.3. **Mystic - power**

Some people try to attain mystic power for becoming perfect. Such mystic power might militate against one's progress towards God-realization. For one who acquire mystic power, there is the danger of becoming proud of his achievements, as a result of which he would be compelled to gradually neglect God. Mystic power is not at all required for progression on the devotional path. However, Allah can award mystic power to His dear devotees for the execution of their particular service to Him, though they themselves care little for mystic power. When the devotees are endowed with mystic power for discharging devotional service to God, such endowment is beneficial for devotees and people alike. If it is required, Allah Himself will award mystic power to the deserving person.

Thus Allah explains in the Holy Qur'an how He bestowed mystic power to His messenger, namely Moses:

Wa ma tilka bi-yaminika ya-Musa

Qala hiya 'asaya 'ata-wakka-'u 'alayha wa 'ahushu biha 'ala ganami wa liya fiha ma-'aribu 'ukhra

Qala 'alqiha ya-Musa

Fa-'alqaha fa-'iza hiya hayatun-tas-'a

Qala khuzha wa la ta-khaf / sanu-'iduha siratahal-ula.

Wazmum yadaka 'ila janahika takhruj bayza min gayri su-'in 'ayatan 'ukhra

Li-nuriyaka min 'ayati-nal-kubra:

"What is that in your right hand, O Moses?

He (Moses) said: 'It is my stick, on it I lean and with it I beat down branches for my sheep, and in it I find other uses.'

(Allah) said: 'Throw it down, O Moses!'

So he threw it down and behold! It was a snake slithering.

(Allah) said: 'Grasp it and fear not. We shall restore it to its former condition.

Now thrust your hand under your armpit; it will come forth unharmed, white (and shining), as another token -

In order that We may show you (some) of Our greater signs'." (20.17-23)

Wa 'izis-tasqa Musa li-qawmihi faqlnazrib-bi-'asakal-hajar / fan-fajarat min-husnata 'ashrata 'ayna / Qad 'alima kulli 'unasim-mashrabahum: "When Moses asked for water for his people, We (Allah) said: 'Strike the rock with your stick.' Then, from there, twelve springs gushed forth (so that) each tribe knew its drinking-place." (2.60)

Here we have a reference to the tribal organization of the Jews, which played a great part in their forty years of march through the Arabian deserts (Num. I and II) and their subsequent settlement in the land of Canaan (Josh. XIII and XIV). The twelve tribes were descendants of the sons of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel (soldier of Allah) after he had wrestled with Allah (Genesis XXXII.28). Israel had twelve sons (Gen. XXXV.22-26), including Levi and Joseph. The descendants of these twelve sons were the "Children of Israel." Levi's family obtained the priesthood and the care of the Tabernacle. They were exempted from military duties. For such exemption, the census was taken (Num. I.47-53). They were distributed among all the Tribes, and were really a privileged caste and not numbered among the Tribes. Moses and Aaron belong to the house of Levi.

The above mentioned verses of the Holy Qur'an are connected with the story of Moses, the messenger of God (20.9-99).

Long after the age of Joseph, who had been a minister to one of the Pharaohs, there came on the throne of Egypt a Pharaoh who hated the Israelites and wanted them to be annihilated. He ordered the Egyptian midwives to kill Israelite male babies. But

fortunately, Moses was shielded from them, and his mother hid him. But when the danger of discovery was imminent Allah instructed her thus: "Feed Moses with your breast milk; then put him into a basket, and send the basket floating down the Nile. The great river shall throw him onto its bank whence an enemy to Me and to him shall take him away. But you need neither fear nor grieve. I shall bring him back to you and make him one of Our messengers."

She did this and sent her daughter to follow the basket and see where and into whose hands it went. So Moses's sister observed him always from afar. The basket was floated into the river Nile. It flowed on into a stream that passed through Pharaoh's garden. It was picked up by Pharaoh's people and the child was adopted by Pharaoh's wife. The Pharaoh had apparently no son, but only a daughter, who afterwards shared his throne. It is probable that it was an early Pharaoh of the XVIIIth Dynasty, say Thothmes I, about 1540 BC. Thus, the family of Pharaoh Thothmes I took him up.

Then the sister of Moses went to them and said: "Shall I search out a good wet-nurse for the child, that she may rear the child you are going to adopt?" That was exactly what they wanted. She ran home and told her mother. The mother was delighted to come and fold the infant in her arms again and feed it at her own breast. Thus Allah restored Moses to his mother so that she may be comforted and no longer grieve, and so she will know that the promise of Allah is true.

Years passed. The child grew up. When Moses reached his full strength and was ripe, Allah gave him wisdom and knowledge. One day, he went to the Israelite colony and saw all the Egyptian oppression under which Israel labored. He saw an Egyptian smiting an Israelite, apparently with impunity. The Israelite asked Moses for help. So Moses struck the Egyptian with his fist and killed him. He did not intend to kill him, but in fact the Egyptian died of the blow. Moses was full of regrets and repentance, and he prayed to Allah, and obtained Allah's forgiveness.

In the morning one man came, who was friendly to him, from the utmost part of the city.

He said: "O Moses! The chiefs are making plans to slay you. Therefore escape."

So he fled out of Egypt to the Sinai Peninsula, to the land of the Midianites. There he married one of the daughters of the Midianite chief, and lived with the Midianites for many years.

After many years spent in a quiet life, grazing his father-in-law's flocks, Moses came one day to the valley of Tuwa underneath the great mountain mass of Sinai, called Tur. He saw in the distance a fire and said to his family: "Wait here. I see a fire in the distance. Perhaps I shall bring you tidings, or a charred piece of wood from the fire so that you may warm yourselves."

When he reached it, he was addressed by Allah: "O Moses! I am your Lord. So take off your shoes, for you stand in the sacred valley of Tuwa. I have chosen you. What is that in your right hand?"

Moses answered: "This is my stick."

Allah ordered: "O Moses, throw it down." So he threw it down, and it became a snake.

Allah said: "Grasp it again and fear it not. We shall return it to its former condition. Also thrust your hand within your armpit, it will come forth white and shining without hurt. This will be another token, which We may show you from Our greater signs. Now go to Pharaoh. He has transgressed the limits."

Moses said: "O my Lord! Relieve my mind, and ease my task for me. I beg you remove the impediment from my speech, so they may understand Your message. And give me a helper from my family, Aaron, my brother. Strengthen me through him, and let him share my task."

Allah replied: "You are granted your request, O Moses. Now go with your brother to Pharaoh and speak unto him a gentle word, that perhaps he may heed or fear."

They said: "Our Lord! We fear that he may be hasty with us or that he may be cruel and unjust."

Allah replied: "Fear not. I am with you both always, hearing and seeing. So go on to him and say: "We are two messengers of your Lord. So let the Children of Israel come with us, and do not torment them. We bring you a token from your Lord."

Their mission was in the first instance to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians, and then to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.

When this message was delivered, Pharaoh asked them: "O Moses! Who is your Lord?"

Moses replied: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each created thing its form, then guided it aright."

Pharaoh again questioned: "What then is the condition of the previous generations?"

Moses answered: "The knowledge of that is with my Lord duly recorded."

Pharaoh said: "If you came with a token, then produce it."

Then Moses threw down his stick and it became a snake, and he drew forth his hand from his bosom and it had become white in color and shining for the people to see.

The chiefs of Egyptians accused Moses of a design to deprive them of their land, and of exercising black magic.

Pharaoh said: "We surely can produce similar magic."

So he called all the famous magicians. The magicians cast their spell first which deceived the people's eyes. Their ropes and their sticks, by the magic, seemed to move about like snakes. So realistic was the effect that even Moses felt a fear in his mind.

Allah said to him: "Fear not! You are higher. That which they have made is but a magician's trick, and a magician shall not be successful to whatever point of skill he may attain. Throw your stick!" Moses did this and his stick swallowed up their sticks. Thus Truth stood victorious over illusion.

Then the magicians fell down prostrate, crying: "We believe in the Lord of the worlds, the Lord of Moses and Aaron."

Pharaoh said: "You believe in Him before I give you permission! Moses is your chief who taught you magic! This is the plot that you have plotted in my city so that you may take its people with you. Now surely I will cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify all of you."

The magicians replied: "We no longer see you as higher than the Truth that has been revealed to us or see you as higher than He Who created us. So do what you will do. You will end for us only the life of this miserable world. We believe in our Lord, that He may forgive our sins, including the magic unto which you forced us to do. Verily he who comes to his Lord as a sinner, - for him there is hell. There he will neither die nor live. But those who come to Him as believer, having done righteous works, there are higher stations. O Allah! Invest unto us steadfastness and allow us to die as men who have surrendered to You."

Pharaoh's order against the magicians was drastic enough. But his Council is not satisfied. "If you leave Moses and the Israelites alone," they say, "where will be your authority? You and your gods will be defied!"

Pharaoh said: "We will slay their male children and save alive their females. The race of Israel would thus be at an end."

Time passes, and at last Moses is commanded by Allah: "Take away My servants by night and strike for them a dry path through the sea, fearing not to be swallowed by Pharaoh's army or by the sea." Moses did this. He took the people of Israel and went to the Red Sea shore into Sinai Peninsula. There Moses tapped the sea with his stick and created a dry path in the sea. The people raced across this path. When Pharaoh followed with his armies, the sea folded itself over, wiping out the whole army.



From this story we can understand that Allah provides any kind of mystic power to His pure devotees to establish His mission. While people who try to develop mystic powers and make show of it are condemned.

Thus in the Holy Qur'an, it is explained that mystic power is bestowed by God and can be useful in the service of God. Otherwise it is useless. Those who desire the material perfections of mystic power are all restless because they want something for themselves, but the devotee is completely peaceful because he has no demand for himself and is always ready to serve the desire of the Lord. The master of mystic powers, can exhibit eight kinds of wonders by becoming smaller than the atom or lighter than a feather, getting anything and everything he desires, going anywhere and everywhere he likes, creating even a planet in the sky, etc. There are many mystics having different proficiencies in these wonderful powers. They can perform such wonderful things, far beyond the ordinary living beings capabilities. The devotees of the Lord do not directly practice the process of attaining mystic powers, but, by the grace of the Lord, His devotee can defeat even a great mystic. Those who have reached the highest perfectional stage of mystic power can see everything in the past, present and future. Similarly, the devotees of the Lord can see everything that is in the revealed scriptures clearly. The devotees of Allah can very easily understand the science of Allah, as well as the situation of the material and spiritual creations. Devotees do not have to endeavor for any perfection in mystic powers. They are competent to understand everything by the mercy of the Lord. Mystics are generally attracted to the by-products of mystic power, for they can become smaller than the smallest or greater than the greatest, achieve anything they desire, have power even to create a planet, or bring anyone they like under their subjection. Mystics who have incomplete information about the result of devotional service are attracted by these powers, but these powers are material; they have nothing to do with spiritual progress. Just as other material powers are created by the material energy, mystic powers are also material. A perfect devotee's mind is not attracted by any material power, but is simply attracted by unalloyed service to the Supreme Lord. For a devotee, the process of merging into Allah's effulgence is considered to be hellish, and mystic power or the preliminary perfection of mystic power, which is to control the senses, is automatically achieved. As for elevation to heavenly planets, a devotee considers this to be simply hallucinatory. A devotee's attention is concentrated only upon the eternal loving service of the Lord, and therefore the power of death has no influence over him. In such a devotional state, a perfect devotee can attain the status of immortal knowledge and bliss.

#### **24.4. Union - with - the - Lord**

There are some kind of spiritualists like the Sufis who try to become one with the Supreme. They proclaim, "An al-Haqq" - "I am Truth". The Sufis accept impersonalism, believing in the oneness of the living entity with the Absolute Truth. Their supreme slogan is "An Al-Haqq", which philosophically means "I am one with Allah" or "I am Allah". The union with the Supreme of the impersonalists and the union with the Supreme of the devotees are not on a par. The impersonalists try to fully stop their individuality by attaining unification through merging into oneness, whereas the devotees keep their individuality so that they can exchange feelings in relationship with the

supreme individual Lord. Such reciprocation of feelings takes place in the spiritual world, and therefore the liberation sought by the impersonalists is already achieved in devotional service. The devotees attain liberation automatically, while continuing the transcendental pleasure of maintaining individuality. The destination of the devotees is the supreme abode, the place where anxieties, distress and unhappiness simply do not exist. One should not mistake the destination of the devotees and that of the impersonalists to be one and the same. The destinations are distinctly different, and the transcendental pleasure



derived by the devotee is also distinct from spiritual feelings alone. Those who try to avoid fruitive activity and those who become silent in order to merge into the spiritual existence of the Absolute Truth are generally known as speculative philosophers. They are not interested in fruitive activity, but only in merging into the Supreme. In either case, both are interested in personal benefit. The fruitive workers are directly interested in personal benefit within the material world, and the speculative philosophers are interested in merging into the existence of the Supreme. The speculative philosophers maintain that fruitive activity is imperfect. For them, perfection is the cessation of work and the merging into the supreme existence. That is their goal in life. The speculative philosopher wants to extinguish the distinction between knowledge, the knower and the aim of knowledge. This

philosophy is called monism, or oneness, and is characterized by spiritual silence. There are two parties of philosophers, generally known as the monists and the dualists. The monist believes in the oneness of the Absolute Truth and the living entity, but the dualist believes in the separate identities of the living being and the Absolute Truth. Above these two classes of philosophers is the philosophy of simultaneous oneness and difference. This philosophy was propounded by Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Union with the Supreme does not always indicate that a living being merges into the existence of the Lord. To become one with God means to attain one's original, spiritual quality. Unless one attains one's spiritual quality one cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The members of the impersonalist school explain their idea of oneness by the example of the mixing of river water with sea water. But we should know that within the water of the sea there are living beings, who do not merge into the existence of water but keep their separate identities and enjoy life within the water. They are one with the water in the sense that they have attained the quality of living within the water. Similarly, the spiritual world is not without its separate paraphernalia. A living being can keep his separate spiritual identity in the spiritual kingdom and enjoy life with the Supreme Spiritual Being, Allah.

## 24.5. Devotional-service

Different processes of self-realization such as fruitive activity, speculative knowledge; mystic power and union with the Supreme can gradually lead one to the ultimate perfection of life, which is devotional service to the Supreme Lord. If one, sincerely and without selfish motives, sacrifices some fruits of his activity to God or cultivates knowledge to understand God or acquires mystic power to perceive God or tries to unite with God, then he can gradually become eligible to perform pure devotional service to God. One can serve God in numerous ways; however, pure devotional service with love



and affection through complete surrender to the will of God is the highest perfection of human life.

Ultimately therefore, in the Holy Qur'an, everything else is refuted and devotional service to the Supreme Lord is established:

Bala man 'aslama wajha-hu lillahi wa huwa muhsinun falahu 'ajruhu 'inda Rabbih / wa la khawfun 'alayhim wa la hum yahzanun: "Whoever surrenders his whole self to Allah while doing good, he will get his reward with his Lord; there shall

shall they grieve." (2.112)

At-ta-'ibunal-'abidunal-hami-dunas-sa-'ihunar-raki-'u-nas-saji-dunal-'ami runa bil-ma 'rufi wana-huna 'anil-munkari wal-hafizuna li-hudu-dillah: "(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to Allah), those who serve Him, those who praise Him, those who fast, those who bow down, those who fall prostrate in worship, those who enjoin the right and who forbid the wrong and those who observe the limits set by Allah." (9.112)

Alla ta'budu 'illal-lah: "Serve none but Allah." (11.2)

Qulid-'ullaha 'awid-'ur-Rahman / 'ayama tad-'u fala-hul-'asma-'ul-husna / wa la tajhar bi-salatika wa la tukhafit biha wabtagi bayna zalika sabila: "Say: 'Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman (Beneficent), by whatever name you call upon Him (it is well). For to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Neither speak your prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between." (17.110)

Wa 'innallaha Rabbi wa Rabbukum fa-buduh / haza siratum-mustaqim: "Verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord. So serve Him. That is the right path." (19.36)

Inna-lazina 'inda Rabbika la yastak-biruna 'an 'iba-datihi wa yusabi-hunahu wa lahu yas-judun: "Those who are with your Lord are not too proud to do Him service, but they praise Him and adore Him." (7.206)

Innani 'anallahu la 'ilaha 'illa 'ana fa-budni wa 'aqimis-salata li-zikri: "Verily, I am Allah. There is no god but I. So serve Me and establish worship for My remembrance." (20.14)

Ya-'ibadiyallazina 'amanu 'inna 'arzi wasi-'atun-fa-'iyyaya fa-budun: "O My servants who believe! Truly, My earth is spacious. Therefore serve Me only." (29.56)

Fruitive activity, speculative knowledge, mystic power and desire to merge into the existence of the Supreme cannot lead one to the goal of perfection. Fruitive work, in which almost all people in general are engaged, is always painful either in the beginning or at the end. It can be fruitful only when made subservient to the devotional service of the Lord. The result of such fruitive work must be offered for the service of the Lord, otherwise it leads to material bondage. The bona fide enjoyer of fruitive work is the Supreme Lord, and thus when it is engaged for the sense gratification of the living beings, it becomes an acute source of trouble.

One should know that Allah is the friend of everyone, whether he be an ordinary worker, an empiric philosopher, or even a mystic - and what to speak of the transcendentalists who are unselfish servitors of God. The Supreme Lord always does good for one and all by empowering His devotees to preach and propagate the transcendental process of devotional service to God everywhere, in accord with the specific time, place, and audience. The Lord is therefore called the prime cause of all causes and the reservoir of all blessings. And the people in general can attain perfect peace and tranquillity when they come to know Him by the gradual process of devotional service with transcendental results.

The highest summit of spiritual perfection is knowledge of the Supreme Lord. Unless one is firmly convinced of the different opulences of the Supreme Lord, he cannot engage in devotional service. Generally people know that Allahu Akbar or Allah is Great, but they do not know in detail how Allah is Great. If one knows factually how Allah is Great, then naturally he becomes a surrendered soul and engages himself in the devotional service of the Lord. When one factually knows the opulence of the Supreme, there is no alternative but to surrender to Him. This factual knowledge can be known from the descriptions of the bona fide Scriptures.

With our present materialized senses we cannot perceive anything of the transcendental Lord. Our present senses are to be rectified by the process of devotional service, and then the Lord reveals Himself to us. The transcendental Lord can be perceived only by pure devotional service. So it is confirmed in the Holy Qur'an that only devotional service can lead one to the side of Allah and that only devotional service can reveal Him. The Lord is always visible to the devotees whose eyes have been anointed with the tinge of devotional service. So we have to take information of the transcendental form of the Lord from persons who have actually seen Him with perfect eyes smeared with devotional

service. In the material world also we do not always see things with our own eyes; we sometimes see through the experience of those who have actually seen or done things. If that is the process for experiencing a mundane object, it is more perfectly applicable in matters transcendental. So only with patience and perseverance can we realize the transcendental subject matter regarding the Absolute Truth. He is formless to the neophytes, but He has a transcendental form for the expert servitor.

## **CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE**

Allah has the beautiful names

Qulid-'ullaha 'awid-'ur-Rahman 'ayyama tad-'u fala-hul-'asma-'ul-husna:

"Say: Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman (Beneficent), by whatever name you call upon Him (it is well). For to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names."

(The Qur'an 17.110)

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said: "Some scholars of the Qur'an are not very advanced in philosophical knowledge. Although there are many methods prescribed to reach perfection, they do not know the ultimate conclusion of the Qur'an, which should be considered the most powerful. Studying your own Qur'an and deliberating over what is written there, what is your conclusion?"

(Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila, 18.197-198)

The saintly Muslim replied, "All that you have revealed is true. This has certainly been written in the Qur'an, but some of our scholars can neither understand nor accept this side. Usually they describe Allah's impersonal aspect, but they hardly know that Allah's personal feature is worshipable. They are undoubtedly lacking this knowledge. I have studied the Muslim scriptures very extensively, but I still cannot conclusively decide what is the ultimate goal of life or how I can approach it. Now that I have seen and heard you, my false prestige that grew on me from being a learned scholar has been washed away." (50, Madhya-lila, 18.199-203) Saying this, the saintly Muslim took shelter of Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, accepted him as spiritual preceptor and requested him to speak of life's ultimate goal and the process by which it could be obtained.

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu answered, that ultimate goal of human life is the love of God and the process by which it could be obtained is chanting the holy names of God, "You have chanted the holy name of God, therefore the sinful reactions you have accumulated over millions of years are now gone. You are now pure."

Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu then told all the Muslims there, "Chant the holy name of God! Chant the holy name of God!" As they all began to chant, they were all overwhelmed by ecstatic love. In this way Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu indirectly initiated the saintly Muslim by advising him to chant the holy name of God. By hearing from Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, a pure surrendered devotee of God, the saintly Muslim with great joy and ecstasy received the deeper realizations of the Holy Qur'an. Previously he had been amazed and hooked on the beauty of the external opulence of the



treasure chest but now by the association of a pure surrendered devotee and chanting the holy name the real personal treasure was been revealed. He felt so much love and devotion for Allah that he began to realize how Allah is his real friend, his merciful guide, his only provider and maintainer and his loving well-wisher. He realized that Allah has a never-ending personal relationship with



everyone, He personally instructs each and everyone from inside and outside, He loves every single living entity but He takes special care of the living beings that are sincerely trying to devote everything to Him. He began to consciously see that Allah is just waiting for us to place our dependence on Him and take shelter of His supreme guidance and protection. Allah proclaims that who ever takes shelter of Him with love and devotion will without a doubt attain the supreme destination. By the mercy of Allah the Muslim scholar finally realized the ultimate goal of the Holy Qur'an is to bring us to the point of surrender and dependence on Allah, the beginning of love of God.

The hidden meaning of the Qur'anic verses were revealed to the saintly Muslim and his heart was overwhelmed with love and devotion. He realized that aside of the impersonal nature, the personal nature of Allah is worshipable. This personal nature of Allah can be realized by the association and mercy of the pure devotees. There was another Muslim present whose name was Vijuli Khan. He was a young man, the son of the king. All the other Muslims, Pathanas, headed by the saintly scholar were his servants.

Vijuli Khan overwhelmed with the power of pure spiritual knowledge also took shelter of Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Before Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu moved on, he bestowed His blessings upon them. All the Pathana Muslims then became mendicants. Later these very Pathans became celebrated as Pathana Devotees. They toured all over the country and chanted the glorious activities of Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Vijuli Khan became a greatly advanced devotee of God and his importance was celebrated at every place of pilgrimage.

In this way Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, without considering a mans bodily designations such as religion, color, creed, sex, age and position, traveled and spread the essence, the ultimate conclusion of all bona fide scriptures. He explained that love of God

is attainable when anyone sincerely endeavors to take shelter of the Supreme Lord and chants His holy names.

It is again and again stressed in the Holy Qur'an,

Fasabih bismi Rabbikal 'Azim: "So chant the name of your Tremendous Lord." (69.52)

This is the essential recommendation of all authentic scriptures of the world.

The hadith related by Tirmizi mentions 99 names of Allah. According to another tradition, knowledge of Allah is based on the 99 names. One tradition is that there are 3,000 names of Allah as follows: 300 given in Taureet, 300 in Zabur, 300 in Injil and 99 + 1 (hidden name) in the Holy Qur'an. All other names remain unknown. (22, p.43)

According to one ancient tradition if one discovers the 100th hidden name of Allah he will be able to conquer the entire world.

These 99 names or attributes are classified under six categories:

1. First category has seven names, which describe the absolute being and unity of Allah;
2. Five names present Him as the Creator of all;
3. Four names present His special moral attributes;
4. Eighteen names refer to His general attributes;
5. Twenty four names, known as isma-e-jamaliya (beautiful names) represent Him as merciful and gracious;
6. Forty one names, known as isma-e-jalaliya (glorious and awe-inspiring names) represent Him as all powerful and absolute Sovereign God.

Allah is al-Qadir (the Powerful), al-Jabbar (the Strong), al-Hassib (the Reckoner), al-Kabir (the Great), al-Adil (the Just), al-Rabb (the Lord) and al-Qabiz (the Controller). All these names of Allah are of the category of isma-e-jalaliya (glorious names) also translated as terrible names. (22, pp. 35-39)

Abuhurairah witnessed that the Apostle of God said: "Verily there are 99 names for God; and whoever counts them shall enter into Garden. He is

- 1) Allah - that which there is no other;
- 2) Al-Rahman - the compassionate;
- 3) Al-Rahim - the merciful;

- 4) Al-Malik - the king;
- 5) Al-Kudus - the pure;
- 6) Al-Salam - His nature is secure from defect;
- 7) Al-Momin - the shelter;
- 8) Al-Muhaimin - the witness;
- 9) Al-Aziz - the powerful and incomparable;
- 10) Al-Jabbar - the benefactor;
- 11) Al-Mutacabbir - the mighty doer;
- 12) Al-Khalid - the creator;
- 13) Al-Bari - the fixer of quantity before creating;
- 14) Al-Musawwir - the giver of likeness;
- 15) Al-Ghaffar - the pardoner;
- 16) Al-Kahhar - the breaker of the backs of tyrants;
- 17) Al-Wahhab - the perpetual bestower;
- 18) Al-Razzak - the sender of daily bread to the creation;
- 19) Al-Fattah - the opener of the doors of mercy on His servants;
- 20) Al-Alim - the omniscient;
- 21) Al-Kabid - the taker of souls;
- 22) Al-Basit - the opener of daily bread on whom He wills;
- 23) Al-Khafid - the sinker of the infidels to the lowest earth;
- 24) Al-Rafi - the raiser up;
- 25) Al-Muizz - the giver of greatness in the world to whom He wills;
- 26) Al-Mudhill - the ruiner;



- 27) Al-Sami - the hearer;
- 28) Al-Basir - the seer;
- 29) Al-Hacam - the orderer, amongst the creation in the expulsion of oppression;
- 30) Al-Adil - the just;
- 31) Al-Latif - the doer of good to the creation;
- 32) Al-Khabir - the knower;
- 33) Al-Halim - the clement;
- 34) Al-Adhim - the great;
- 35) Al-Ghafur - the great pardoner;
- 36) Al-Shacur - the giver of rewards to the grateful;
- 37) Al-Ali - the most high;
- 38) Al-Kabir - the Lord of greatness;
- 39) Al-Hafidh - the guardian;
- 40) Al-Mukit - the giver of strength;
- 41) Al-Hasib - the taker of accounts;
- 42) Al-Jalil - the glorious;
- 43) Al-Carim - the munificent;
- 44) Al-Rakib - the keeper of watch;
- 45) Al-Mujib - the approver of supplications;
- 46) Al-Wasi - the expander;
- 47) Al-Hacim - the knower of the realities of things;
- 48) Al-Wadud - the friend;
- 49) Al-Majid - the lord of glory;

- 50) Al-Baith - the awakener;
- 51) Al-Shahid - the giver of witness;
- 52) Al-Haqq - the truth;
- 53) Al-Wacil - the taker on himself the affairs of servants;
- 54) Al-Kawiy - the strong;
- 55) Al-Matin - the firm;
- 56) Al-Waliy - the assister of true believers;
- 57) Al-Hamid - the praiser of His own nature;
- 58) Al-Muhsi - the counter;
- 59) Al-Mubdi - the creator of new;
- 60) Al-Muid - the causer of return;
- 61) Al-Muhyi - the causer of life;
- 62) Al-Mumit - the causer of death;
- 63) Al-Haiy - the living one, who never dies nor declines;
- 64) Al-Kaiyum - the maker alive of the creation;
- 65) Al-Wajid - the finder of all perfections;
- 66) Al-Majid - the grand;
- 67) Al-Wahid - the one;
- 68) Al-Samad - from the court of whom all desires are supplicated, and he in need of no one;
- 69) Al-Kadir - the Lord of power;
- 70) Al-Maktadir - the Lord of might;
- 71) Al-Mukaddim, al-Mawakhkhir - the bringer before and after;
- 72) Al-Awwal - the first;

- 73) Al-Akhir - the last;
- 74) Al-Dhahir - whose existence is clear;
- 75) Al-Batin - whose realities hidden;
- 76) Al-Wali - the master of all;
- 77) Al-Mutaali - the sublime of degree;
- 78) Al-Barr - doer of good;
- 79) Al-Tawwab - the acceptor of repentance;
- 80) Al-Muntakim - the taker of revenge;
- 81) Al-Afuw - the eraser of sins;
- 82) Al-Rawuf - the benefiter;
- 83) Malik-ul-Mulci - the ruler of countries;
- 84) Dhul-Jalal-wal Icrum - the Lord of glory and greatness;
- 85) Al-Muksit - the giver of justice;
- 86) Al-Jami - the assembler of the creation;
- 87) Al-Ghani - the independent;
- 88) Al-Mughni - the maker of independence;
- 89) Al-Muati - the giver to whom He wills;
- 90) Al-Mani - the withholder from whom He wills;
- 91) Al-Darr - the creator of profit;
- 92) Al-Nafi - the creator of loss;
- 93) Al-Nur - the maker of light and giver of light;
- 94) Al-Hadi - the director;
- 95) Al-Badi - the incomparable;

96) Al-Baki - the eternal;

97) Al-Warith - the heir;

98) Al-Rashid - the shower of the straight road;

99) Al-Sabr - the most patient." (101, p.545)

and

100) Hidden name.



The Holy Qur'an recommends:

Qulid-'ullaha 'awid-'ur-Rahman / 'ayama tad-'u fala-hul 'asma-'ul-husna: "Say: Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman (Beneficent), by whatever name you call upon Him (it is well). For to Him belong the most beautiful names." (17.110)

The Arabic word "Rahman", "Most Gracious" is a intensive form of referring to Allah's attribute of Mercy. Mercy may imply pity, patience and forgiveness, all of which the sinner needs and Allah Most Merciful bestows in abundant measure. But there is a Mercy that goes before even the need arises, the Grace which is ever watchful, and flows from Allah Most Gracious to all His creatures, protecting them, preserving them, guiding them

and leading them to clear light and higher life. Rahman describes one of the attributes of Allah, - His grace and Mercy which comes to the sinner even before he feels consciously in need of it, - the preventive Grace which saves Allah's servants from sin. Allah can be invoked, either by His simple name, which includes all attributes, or by one of the names implying the attributes by which we try to explain His nature to our limited understanding. In Al-Qur'an the holy name Rahman is especially stressed. A very interesting fact is that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in his religious activity put special emphasize on this name of God.

In his instructions Mahaprabhu gave special preference and highlighted the importance of chanting the holy names of God. He said that in this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the only way to attain love of God is by chanting His holy names. By his powerful preaching he involved hundreds of thousands of people from different backgrounds in chanting the holy names of the Supreme Lord. Some scholars said that Mahaprabhu knew the hidden, or secret name of Allah. Therefore he was very powerful and easily conquered the hearts of everyone who approached him. Anyone who listened to his chanting of the holy names of the Supreme Lord joined in and was overwhelmed with ecstatic love for God. Thus chanting the beautiful names of the one Almighty God is the essence of his teachings.

## **EPILOGUE**

We can understand from the ancient history of the Arab peninsula how degraded the ancient Arabs were. They had terrible customs and rituals. They lost their real spiritual knowledge and had become idolaters (those who worship idols, or false gods). The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Sallal-lahu Alaihe Wa Sallam) started to preach in this environment. He preached according to time, place, circumstances and the level of people's spiritual understanding.

Once, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) said, "Speak to people according to the level of their intellectual capacities. For if you speak all things to all men, some cannot understand you, and so fall into errors." (6, p. 31)

In this connection ustad Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes:

"While the basic principles of Allah's Law remain the same, its form, expression and application have varied from time to time, e. g., from Moses to Jesus, and from Jesus to Muhammad. It is one of the beneficent mercies of Allah that we should forget some things of the past, lest our minds become confused and our development is retarded." (9, p. 1939)

The mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) was to reestablish the worship of one God and to stop false gods worship (worshipping unauthorized concocted forms). Even though the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) had been given divine knowledge and vision of Allah's confidential, transcendental form and as we shall show soon, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) factually accepted holy pictures, images and deity worship as bona fide methods of honoring, remembering and serving Allah, he couldn't

reveal this very personal information about Allah because the people were at a stage of great morale degradation and to reveal such sensitive knowledge in these circumstances would have been very dangerous and destructive. So, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) was obliged to completely reject worship of any images or pictures. He had to cut back the disease right down to its root because the religious teachings had become infested by sinful activity right down to their roots.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad's (S. A. W.) mission was not to repair the sick environment but to completely cut it down and reestablish the divine teaching on solid healthy foundations. His mission was to wipe away a spreading disease and give us a foundation which can support our future progress to Allah. Just like history shows us, another representative of Allah, namely Buddha. He came at a time when people were misusing the Vedic sacrificial ceremony. They were killing cows and eating their flesh under the name of serving and pleasing God. This was a very abominable state of affairs. So in order to begin the correction process Buddha was obliged to totally reject Vedic injunctions (the very knowledge that took one to God) and preach ahimsa (non-violence). This had to be established first. Then people were ready to understand and follow the next stage of purification and realization. Just like it would be most dangerous to build nice apartments on top of a building that's rotting away. The correct procedure is to knock it down, strengthen the foundations then begin building nice apartments, one floor after another.

So similarly, according to time, place and circumstances the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) rejected images and pictures. But in one incident which is very prominent in his life he factually accepted a holy picture. This took place when the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) conquered Mecca and entered the Ka'ba, he ordered the destruction of all idols which were being worshipped there. It is alleged that there were paintings on the walls, including pictures of Virgin Mary with infant Jesus in her arms. According to ancient tradition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) ordered all the paintings to be erased except one depicting Jesus and His mother. (80, p. 309) He put His hands over this picture and so saved it from destruction. (94, p. 171), (47, p. 133)

Once, in the earliest Meccan period of his preaching, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) had a revelation which apparently permitted the intercession of the most honorable goddesses. One version of this is:

Did you consider Al-Lat and Al-Uzza

And Al-Manat, the third, the other?

Those are the swans exalted;

Their intercession is expected,

Their likes are not neglected.

(The word translated "swan exalted" means that these are a kind of angelic being.) (113, p. 113)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) prostrated himself at the end of the discourse, and the congregation prostrated also. (94, p. 387), (154, p. 184), (164, p. 21), (122, p. 137)

All these facts show us that factually the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) accepted holy pictures, images, and deity worship but practically completely rejected pictures and images because of time, place and circumstances.

According to the Muslim tradition, a part of the "Heavenly Book" which was kept under the Throne of Allah was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) in the Arabic language. More than this, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) once had miraj, or "ascending" to the heaven and after penetrating the 7th layer of heaven, he attended the Throne of Allah . This time he received divine knowledge from Allah. This divine knowledge given by Allah is of three kinds:

- 1) The knowledge that Allah ordered the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) to conceal;
- 2) The knowledge that Allah let him choose whether he concealed or revealed;
- 3) The knowledge which Allah ordered the Apostle to communicate to all the members of the ummah (community). (63, p. 108)

In this way the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) got part of the unlimited spiritual knowledge and at the same time he was ordered by Allah to conceal some parts of this knowledge. But still, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) gave many hints for those people who had some understanding. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) ascended to heaven and met Allah, Allah was sitting on the Throne. When people asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.), "Have you seen Allah?" The Apostle answered: "I saw only light, a light so intense that Allah sat behind 20,000 curtains. If these curtains were to be removed and someone were to see the face of Allah he would immediately be burned to ashes. (132, p. 108)

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) stood in front of Allah he felt reassured, but He found it hard to stand his ground when Allah stretched out His hands and placed one on his shoulder and the other on his chest. An icy chill froze his bones and his blood . Then the coldness faded and was succeeded by an ecstatic bliss which seemed to carry the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) out of his body into a state of being so marvelous that it was impossible to describe. (52, p. 114)

Muadh-bin-Jabal said:

"The Prophet on one occasion, hindered our saying the morning prayers till we were near seeing the sun, then he hastened out of his house, and the Tacbir was called aloud, then

the Prophet said prayers in haste, and when he had repeated the Salam, he said, " Sit in your places, and I will inform you the cause of my being so late this morning. I got up early, and performed the Wadu, and said prayers, agreeably to the wishes of Allah, and I felt drowsy in my prayers, after which I awoke, and all of a sudden I saw my Creator in a most lovely form, and he said, "O! Muhammad!" I said, "What do you command?" He said, "What do the angels argue about?" I said, "I do not know." Then I saw my God put the palm of his hand between my two shoulders till I felt my breast cold; then everything in the world appeared clear before me, and I knew the whole. Again He asked about disputations of the angels . I replied, "They dispute about deeds which cover sin." (101, p. 155)

Once the Prophet of Islam said:

"Those believers who are in the highest honor with Allah will see the Divine Face morning and evening and compared with which all other pleasures of Paradise will be lightly esteemed and forgotten." (142, p. 94)

It is recorded in tradition from Bukhari and Muslim, that once the Prophet of Islam said, "Allah-Taala (God Most High) created Adam in His own sura (form, image)." (141, p. 45), (100, p. 74)

From these clear evidences of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) himself we can understand that Allah is the Supreme Transcendental Person and has a Spiritual Form .

But let us also see what is the opinion of prominent Muslim scholars.

The author of Jowhara (p.107-112) says:

"It is possible to see Allah in this world as well as in the next. In this world it has been granted to Muhammad only. In the future world, however, all believers will see Him; some say only His eyes, others say His whole face, others say every part of His body." (89, p. 55)

Many Muslims on the basis of Qur'anic verses: (48.10); (25.60); (7.52); (10.3); (32.3); (11.9); (57.4); (75.22-23); (22.60 and 74); (31.27); (42.9); (58.1) believed that Allah posses a head, mouth, eyes, ears, hands and feet just like those of a human being. In the opinion of Abu Mo'ammara al-Hodhali, a preacher at Baghdad, anyone who denied this belief was an infidel. Adherents of the school of the famous traditionist and lawyer Ahmad b. Hanbal have the same opinion. The school's chief later exponent, Ahmad b. Taymiya, called the Mo'tazelites infidels and Ghazzali a heretic; on one celebrated occasion, after quoting the Qur'an in a sermon, he said to the congregation as he stepped down from the pulpit of the great mosque at Damascus,

"Allah will step down from His Throne in the same way as I am stepping down from this pulpit." (33, pp. 157-158)



Abu' Amer ol-Qorashi, a Moor from Majorca declared that it was heretical to understand the sentence, "There is nothing similar to Him (Allah )" in (42.9) as meaning what it says; it meant, in his opinion, that nothing resembles Allah in respect of His divinity, because "Allah possesses limbs and organs like yours and mine." As proof of God's possession of such limbs and organs, Abu' Amer ol-Qorashi cited the description of the Last Judgment in (68.42), and then slapped his thigh and said, "Allah has legs just like mine." (33, p. 159)

A eminent Muslim scholar and ustad (holy preceptor) Al-Ashari (9th century AD), declared in his creeds,

"We confess that Allah has a face, without asking how. . . . We confess that Allah has two hands, without asking why."

Thus, considering all the above mentioned points we can understand that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.), like the prophets of ancient times, revealed knowledge according to time, place and circumstances. But because Allah is al-Rahman-ul-Rahim, the Compassionate and Merciful, He simultaneously reveals knowledge for people of all levels of understanding. If someone wants to understand Him as impersonal and formless He reveals suitable knowledge, if someone is ready to accept Him as personal but formless He reveals the corresponding knowledge, but if someone is sufficiently fortunate and intelligent enough to understand Him on the highest level as the Supreme Transcendental Person possessed of a beautiful, charming and indescribable Spiritual Form He has left sufficient hints to understand this.

Thus I have sincerely tried to present opinions of the most scholarly persons in the world. I have tried to be objective because I accept all religions, all revealed scriptures and all Prophets according to instructions given by Allah in the Qur'an: "Each one believed in Allah and His angels and His scriptures and His messengers. We make no distinction between any of His messengers" (2.285). And I try to be obedient and surrendered to the will of Allah in order to develop love of God. If, by my humble presentation I have disturbed someone's sentiments or offended someone I offer my humble apologies and in the cause of spreading Allah's glories I seek your forgiveness.

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